

# A defenfatiue againſt the poyſon of ſuppoſed Propheſies :

Not hitherto confuted by the penne  
of any man, which being grounded, cyther vppon the  
warrant and authority of olde paynted bookes, expositions  
of *Dreames, Oracles, Reuelations, Inuocations of damned  
ſpirites, Iudicialles of Aſtrologie*, or any other kinde of pretended  
knowledge whatſoeuer, De futuris contingentibus : haue beene cauſes of  
great diſorder in the common wealth, and cheefely among the ſim-  
ple and vnlearned people : very needefull to be publiſhed  
at this time, conſidering the late offence which grew  
by moſt palpable and groſſe errours  
in Aſtrology.

(.)

Iob. 6. 25.

**O**re detraxiſtis ſermonibus veritatis : cum e vobis nullus ſit, qui poſſit  
arguere me veruntamen quod cœpiſtis explete, et videte an mentiar.

Wherefore haue you detracted from the ſwordes of truth, ſince there is  
none among you that is able to reprove mee ? But what ye haue be-  
gunne fulfill, and ſee whether I doo lye :

AT LONDON

Printed by Iohn Charlewood, Printer

to the right Honourable Earle

of Arundell.

*[Faint handwritten signatures and text, likely a library or ownership stamp, including the name "John Charlewood" and "Arundell"]*



# A defence of the prophecies:

Not hispano confuted by the  
of any man, which being founded  
want and authority of the pyramidal book's explications  
of Dr. Owen, Quaker, Revolution, Transient of Landed  
house, & elsewhere of the history, or any other kind of printed  
now, the want of the history of the pyramidal book's explications  
greatly to the contrary, and the history of the pyramidal book's  
the old and new people: very necessary to be published  
at this time, containing the late of the which grew  
by most capable and great errors  
in Astrology

Job 6. 27.  
The sun shall burn the bones, and the worm shall devour the bones.  
The sun shall burn the bones, and the worm shall devour the bones.  
The sun shall burn the bones, and the worm shall devour the bones.  
The sun shall burn the bones, and the worm shall devour the bones.

AT LONDON  
Printed by John Charleswood, Printer  
to the right Honourable House  
of Commons.

1728  
The right Honourable House of Commons  
Ordered, That the said Book be printed  
at the expence of the said House.

To the Right Honorable, Sir  
*Frauncis Walsingham*, principall Se-  
*cretarie to the Queenes Maiestie*,  
and one of her most honourable  
*prinie Counsayle*.



*F* Vitruuius the Judge

of exquisite and perfect workes, al-  
lowe no building to be fullie fini-  
shed, which wants a couer to beare  
out a storme, mine enterprise may  
seeme lesse straunge to you (good  
master Secretarie) for that hauing  
in a manner made an ende of this

rude pyle, though not so formallie, according to the dein-  
tie patternes of *Corinthe*, *Athens*, and the pallaces of *Greece*,  
as painefullie according to the module of my slender skill: I  
presume to shroude the same vnder the shaddow of your  
wings, and to grace it with the loue of your honourable  
name, that enuie may be quite discouraged from giuing a-  
ny sharpe assaulte, or at the least her noysome smoake as-  
cending to the toppe, may finde a vent whereby to vanish.  
For if the sweetnesse of your disposition, the franknesse of  
your minde, the credite of your place, the leuell of your  
long experience, and the depth of your iudgement, be  
meanes sufficient and strong enough, to drawe the mindes  
of persons well disposed, both to loue and honour you, for  
of my parte, I am forced to confesse the bonde of my parti-  
cular affection, and zeale vnto your selfe to be so much in-  
creased by your stedfast freenshippe in the daies of prooffe,



*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

as not my hand alone shall be euer ready to subscribe and sette on the seale, but my heart withall, while it hath any sparke of life to acknowledge the great merite of your vnderferued fauour. For to whome in reason should men rather recommend themselves, then on whome they haue gteatest cause to loue: who may be more securelie trusted in the porte of libertie, then he that once vouchsaued with a fauourable hand to waiste me out of surges of vncertaine chaunce: who can with better ayme determine of a truth, then hee that euer was his freend by nature, and is nowe a strong assistaunt by authoritie: who can better iudge of my conceyte, then he that hath been best acquainted from the first beginning with mine answer. Beside, if it maye please you to recall the tyme to minde, wherein as well to you, as others of your calling, I engaged my assured promise (if God spared lyfe) to giue publique testimony to the world, what my conceite hath euer beene of Prophecies, which wise men value as the scomme of pride, and dregs of ignorance: you maye accept this Treatise rather, in discharge of a former debt, then as the lone of a later vsurie. For as it pleased God to direct the sale of *Ioseph* into Egypt to a certaine ende, although he vnderstoode it not, nor any of those instrumentes that sought to ridde him out of the way for another cause. As saint Phillip had a kind of liking to the beaten way, whereby *Queene Candaces* zealous *Eunuch* could not choose but passe, although he were not priue to the plotte which GOD had set in heauen, before he were employed therein, so from the sixteenth yeere of mine age, vntyll this present daye, (I knowe not whether by instinct of prouidence, or warning by mishaps of some that went before) my manner hath beene in the course of all my reading, to store vp all such reasons and examples, as

occur-

*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

occurred eyther in Philosophie, the ciuill lawes, diuinitie,  
or histories, to the ruine of pretended Prophetes, and their  
Prophecies: although in trueth I could no more foresee  
what accident might moue mee afterward to dispose and  
marshall them in order for mine owne defence, then either  
*Ioseph* or *Phillippe* knewe what should betide them in their  
iourney. My care and study hath beene onely to do that  
which might be consonant to the wyll and pleasure of al-  
mighty God, agreeable to the circūstaunces of the present  
tyme sufficient for mine owne discharge, and pleasing in  
hir sight, whome peerelesse vertues planted in a royall  
stocke, haue exempted from comparison. If nothing then  
that eyther helpeth not, or tendeth not to this prefixed  
scope be published and recommended by my penne: my  
hope is then, I may be bolde to blase your name in the first  
page of my Booke, with lyke deuotion to that where-  
with the Romanes vsed to set forth the portraite of theyr  
most assured freend, in the formost front of theyr pal-  
lace. And albeit the sacrifices which in olde tyme were  
offered to GOD, might neither be vnperfect, defectiue,  
or lame in any part, yet courtesies which flowe from sted-  
fast freendes, may be regarded for theyr simple and playne  
meaning, though not for theyr weight: as pearles beare  
prices, not according to theyr value, which is sleight, but  
according to the common estimate, which is of more im-  
portaunce. Touching the faultes or ouersightes escaped in  
this booke, as I doubt not but there may be some, because  
I am a man, and, *Labi est humanum*, so could I wishe, that  
eyther they were noted with discretion, or concealed with  
humanitie. But forasmuch as not the qualities alone, but  
the moodes and humers also of such persons, as are lyke  
enough to cauil, & except against this plaine desēsatue, are



*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

founde to differ by degrees, I will endeavour as I may to sorte them into sundry formes, that a Lyon may be no lesse easily discerned by his pawes, then an Adder by his sting, and both by theyr exercise. The learned may reprove with reason what I have overseene with haste, in recompence whereof, I will be no lesse willing to reforme, then they are to admonish, supposing this ground to be alwaies certaine and vnfalible, that they can not be sayd to swarue or erre so much, which confesse themselves to be quite beside the way, as others that are not ashamed to pretende a matchlesse vnderstanding in those matters, wherein they are altogether ignoraunt. The Bandogges whose enuomed and spightfull teeth, I feare are of three sorts, and yet all whelpes of that accursed kinde, which driue men with their bawling, from the conquest of the golden fleefe, that is regarded by the worthy. The first sort, setting downe theyr iudgement touching any matter, looke not into the subiect, but the writer that discourseth therevpon, and that with such a partial & preiudicat conceite, as *Battus* shall be sooner crowned with a Lawrell, if he beare theyr liuerye, then *Homere* wyth an Iuie garlande, if hee wryte not in theyr honor. If the personne whom they like not for particuler offence, be found to flourish in discourse, they charge him with too much abounding in his wordes, (though *Cicero* prefer a witte, from which we may detract before that whervnto we shall be fayne to adde) if he gather and conclude his reasons in a narrow rowme, they touch him with obscuritye according to theyr manner, which as one wites, *Nec breuia valent intelligere, nec prolixia amant legere*, are neither able to conceiue that which is short, nor willing to read ouer any thing that is enlarged. If he make some choise of words, *Aucupatur sillabas*, he hunts for

*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

for sillables, if not, the work is dry & not worthy reading. If he write in prayse of any person, they demaunde a fine for flattery, if of none, for enuie. If he follow the point orderly, which he takes in hand to prooue, the man is tedious, if he digresse to recreate and refresh a painefull reader, friuolous. If euery string accorde not with the descant of the present time, the writer is a Malecontēt, if he play with dutifull regarde vppon the meane, no fauourer, if he runne too rancke vppon the trebble, then an hipocrite: inuention with these is vanity, discretion cunning, & to ward our selues a wrong to the mallicious. Let men keepe theselues as warily as they can deuise, out of the shorrs of enuie or curiosity, yet all can not content these sharpe inquisitors, who skirmishing against the shaddowes and chimeras of their owne conceite, and supposing whatsoeuer credite is attained by the merite of another, to be compassed in their disgrace, are to be left eyther to the punishment of God, or to the recoil of their owne iniuries, notwithstanding I woulde wish the well disposed, to take notice of their humor, either by the reason which they vouch against another, or by conceiuing how they stand affected to the man, or by enquiring whither custome haue not bredde in the a kinde of habite, of swimming alwaies with the Trowt against the streame, *Destruendi aliena quam adificandi sua*, of vndermining other mens endeouour, rather the erecting of their owne, or whither they be not simple and vnlearned in alliares, because as *Cicero* discourseth against *Anthony*, *Nemo aliena virtuti inuidet qui satis confidit sua*, wherefore I leaue the first kinde as discovered like Rattes, by theyr creeping vnder vailes, wishing that eyther they woulde change their moode, or that the wiser sorte will gine no further credite then belongeth to so great indignity.

The



*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

The second sort is the more perilous, in this respect that they carrie poison vnder sullen lookes, & bestowe their censures no lesse peenishly by silent scorne then by lauish vttiace; for *Cæsar* neither stode in feare of *Cicero* nor of *Dolabella*, who were bothe loose and quicke of speech, but feared rather, *Pallidos & tacitos*, as *Brutus* and *Cassius*, who bark not, but pinch before warning. I haue both heard and read of certaine persons, who for the space of many yeeres, insulting vpon the miseries of all men that by any meane haue been plunged in disgrace, haue challenged vnto themselves withall, a peremptorie censure in all matters, aspiring only to this point and height of credite, that presumption may prescribe against desert, & their voices be regarded as *Apollons* oracles. Against these I discourse more frankly, because miennes eares haue witnessed at sundrie times, the wronges which they haue doone to others without any reasonable ground, (vnlesse it may be rated as a fault, to publishe any thing in print, which hath not both been seen, and perhaps ouerseen by them) and if I be not much deceiued, I am not vnlike to be tried by the same crooked measure. So long as any light exception may be taken, either to the substance of the matter, or the maner of enditing, they seeke not to trauaile very farre for reasons of reproofe, but if that blowe be shunned and preuented warilie by the writers diligence: then fall they to coigne freshe authours, with the stampe of their owne deuise, from whence the groundes of all discourses may be supposed to be drawne by stealth, endeavouring in places where their speeches are of sound record to charge a man with theft, whome they cannot touch with ignoraunce. The feare of this hath made me vouch mine authours which make for my purpose, in the verie bookes & leaues wherein the places lie, so that plain dealing may defend

*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

defend it selfe, where secrete mallice lurketh vnder vayles & shadowes of hipocrisie. But as it is a rule that whosoeuer dare speake what him list, is like sometimes to heare more then contentes his humor : so must I craue a licence (as it were) to sound the depth of those condemning wits, which demaünd account of all men & in modest maner, to reduce their lawlesse scopes to the boundes of reason. First, therefore we must note their wisdom to be verie base, and such GOD knowes, as hitherto, hath yeelded greater store of thornes then fruits, excepting complements of seruile flatterie, which some count learned skyll, to shifte their sailes according to the sitting of the wind, and taking colour like chameleons and lobsters of the sande or stone wherevnto they cleaue (for pollicie, but not for loue :) applic their studies either to deuoure young frie, or to deceiue olde creditors. And though they looke as bigge as *Esopes* long-eared beast in a Lions skin, though they carrie *Gorgones* head in an escorcheon of pretence, though they loue the tables end lyke Phariseis, and stroke their beardes fine times, as the Doctors of *Sorbona* that disputed with *Erasmus*, did before they bring out onewise word, though they take vpō them to discourse, *De omni scibile cum nihil sciant*, and enterlarde their fancies with the iudgemēt of great learned men, as if the line of right were euer in the leuel of their eie, yet their conceite and vnderstanding is so slight and shallowe, as neither they are able to define any thing saue assentation, (whose *Genus & differētiā*, they know much better thē the deepest Doctor in the schooles,) nor to denide any thing, sauing perfect and assured vnitie. They presse with eager appetite, into the knowledge of such matters as are farre aboue their reach, though short of their opiniō, and finding that the rowmes are either full, or that the learned iudges of their skill desire no cōpany with *Crassus* they are wont



*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

The second sort is the more perilous, in this respect that they carrie poison vnder sullen lookes, & bestowe their censures no lesse peenishly by silent scorne then by lauish vterāce; for *Casari* neither stood in feare of *Cicero* nor of *Dolabella*, who were bothe loose and quicke of speech, but feared rather, *Pallidos & tacitos*, as *Brutus* and *Cassius*, who bark not, but pinch before warning. I haue both heard and read of certaine persons, who for the space of many yeeres, insulting vpon the miseries of all men that by any meane haue been plunged in disgrace, haue challenged vnto themselves withall, a peremptorie censure in all matters, aspiring only to this point and height of credite, that presumption may prescribe against desert, & their voices be regarded as *Apollon*s oracles. Against these I discourse more frankly, because miennes eares haue witnessed at sundrie times, the wronges which they haue doone to others without any reasonable ground, (vnlesse it may be rated as a fault, to publishe any thing in print, which hath not both been seen, and perhaps ouer seen by them) and if I be not much deceiued, I am not vnlike to be tried by the same crooked measure. So long as any light exception may be taken, either to the substance of the matter, or the maner of enditing, they seeke not to trauaile very farre for reasons of reproofe, but if that blowe be shunned and preuented warilie by the writers diligence: then fall they to coigne freshe authours, with the stampe of their owne deuise, from whence the groundes of all discourses may be supposed to be drawne by stealth, endeavoring in places where their speeches are of sound record to charge a man with theft, whome they cannot touch with ignoraunce. The feare of this hath made me vouch mine authours which make for my purpose, in the verie bookes & leaues wherein the places lie, so that plain dealing may defend

*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

defend it selfe, where secrete mallice lurketh vnder vayles & shadowes of hipocrisie. But as it is a rule that whosoever dare speake what him list, is like sometimes to heare more then contentes his humor : so must I craue a licence (as it were) to sound the depth of those condemning wits, which demaünd account of all men & in modest maner, to reduce their lawlesse scopes to the boundes of reason. First, therefore we must note their wisdom to be verie base, and such GOD knowes, as hitherto, hath yeelded greater store of thornes then fruits, excepting complements of seruile flatterie, which some count learned skyll, to shifte their sailes according to the sitting of the wind, and taking colour like chameleons and lobsters of the sande or stone wherevnto they cleaue (for pollicie, but not for loue :) applie their studies either to deuoure young frie, or to deceiue olde creditors. And though they looke as bigge as *Esopes* long-eared beast in a Lions skin, though they carrie *Gorgones* head in an escorcheon of pretence, though they loue the tables end lyke Phariseis, and stroke their beardes fīue times, as the Doctors of *Sorbona* that disputed with *Erasmus*, did before they bring out onewise word, though they take vpo them to discourse, *De omni scibile cum nihil sciant*, and enterlarde their fancies with the iudgemēt of great learned men, as if the line of right were euer in the leuel of their eie, yet their conceite and vnderstanding is so slight and shallowe, as neither they are able to define any thing saue assentation, (whose *Genus & differētiā*, they know much better thē the deepest Doctor in the schooles,) nor to deuide any thing, sauing perfect and assured vnitie. They presse with eager appetite, into the knowledge of such matters as are farre aboue their reach, though short of their opiniō, and finding that the rowmes are either full, or that the learned iudges of their skill desire no cōpany with *Crassus* they are wont



*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

Exo. 10. 5. 6

3. Re. 10. 22

In Ant.  
Phil. 2.

to smile in *Templo*, and to whine in *Angulo*. Faine would they be trusted with the keeping of the Capitoll, but when that cannot be, such is the basenesse of their mindes, as rather then to faile of all expectation, like to the geese at Rome, which were maintained by the common charge, because they once did seruice, though by chance, & not by choise, they wil hisse in a galery. These men canot be compared better thē to the Locusts, *Qua nihil passa sunt germinace*, which would suffer nothing to bloome nor flourish in the land of Egipt. They liue like Vipers, by the marrow which they sucke out of good mens bones, and care not who decays nor by what meanes, so their hornes may be exalted. Sometime they runne with *Abalon* for his curled heare, sometime with *Achitophel* for his cunning head, but sel-dome or neuer with good *David* for religious simplicitie. They followe freendes that are most able to supplie theyr wantes, as Waspes doo honnie, as Antes doo granaris, and as Kites doo carrion: but so soone as any signe of storme, or fowle weather dooth appeare, farewell good freendes, for these sūmer swallowes will seek out a new climate. They runne to Ophir with great hope of gaine, but if the losse of time maye be compared with the feathers of their nest, it may be thought that in steed of golde & siluer, they bring home nothing else but apes and peacockes. Now touching their deepe eloquence, with the peeuish glorie and conceit, whereof they flatter & delight themselues so much, I wish that men will deeme either by their vtterance, which is obstructed with a rheume of rayling, or by their words which are affected, or by their works, which either neuer were at all, or are so drossie and so full of toies as nothing can digest them into order, or refyne them, but a flame or a furnace. It is a rule in *Cicero*, that of all men those are most vnfit to iudge, *Qui aut inuident aut fauent*, and in the ciuill lawes. like.

*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

likewise, *Peritis credendum esse in sua facultate*, but our quicke Cenlores are so gorged vp to the verie throate, with a puffing kinde of enuie, which ariseth not from the stomach but from the splene: as they cannot vtter any simple word with a faithfull meaning. They were neuer well instructed in the grounds of any knowledge, & yet they will not stick to cast at all, while their hands are in, and though their hap be to cast out, and leese for want of skill to make their game: yet all the setters at the table, must be paide and aunswered with graue regards, and signes of greater coppie in the storehouse of their addle heads, then either men dare trust vnto without able suerties, or themselves are able to perfourme without helpe of their neighbours. To these men I will aunswere, as S. *Ierome* dyd almost in the verie case of the lyke kinde of examiners: *Non est grande garrere per angulos, &c.* It is no great matter for men to chatte or carpe in a corner, where either standers by, must giue place for good manner, or holde their peace for modestie. But if any man except against my wordes, let him take his penne and laie downe his groundes, that all the worlde may iudge, whether simplicitie haue beene more strong, or enuie more bolde and impudent. *Bos enim lassus fortius figit pedem*, for a wearie Oxe dooth sette downe his foote, and treade somewhat harder. For though for skill I can not be compared to *Apelles*, yet since the yongest nouice or apprentice is not barred, but encouraged to imitat the best Artificer, in things whereto they gine their minde, I haue aduentured the setting forth of my simple tables, to the sight and scanning of the world: desiring onely that the former law *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*: that no man will finde fault, or checke aboue the compasse of his skill, may be retained and obserued in the iudgement that is geuen, or shalbe giuen vpon my labours. It I haue

L. 3. F de  
insp. ven.

Hieron.  
de ocean.



*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

Gen. 16.5  
erred in Philosophy, Philosophers shall iudge, if in mista-  
king any paragraphe of the Ciuile lawe, let the doctores  
speake, if in the vouching fitte examples out of histories,  
I will abide the touch & try all of antiquitie, if in the sence  
or meaning of the scripture, which comes neereſt to the  
quicke, and blaſteth not my credite onely with diſgrace,  
but my ſoule with mortall ſinne. I muſt onely ſay with *A-*  
*bram, Iudicet Dominus inter nos et illos*, let God iudge  
between our ennemies and vs, and in his abſence I appeale  
to learned writers and preachers of the church; to whom  
the keyes of knowledge and authority were committed, by  
the prince of *Pastors*, for the keeping and mainteyning of  
his beſt beloued ſpouſe, in trueth and vnity. But if I haue  
not erred touching any poynt of weight, in any one of  
theſe, then muſt I ſay with *Auguſtine* againſt the *Dona-*  
*tiſtes, Facile eſt Auguſtinum, vincere ſed viderint utrum*  
*clamore an veritate*. It is an eaſye matter to put downe  
poore *Auguſtine*, but let them take good heede that it bee  
not more with their exclamatiō, then truth, with furie the  
with reaſon. The ſayreſt and moſt certaine courſe there-  
fore, is to appoſe one cauſe againſt another. *Vt et cauſa*  
*eum cauſa certet*, which if any one of theſe inquiſitors per-  
forme, I will encounter as I dare, and forgiue him as I  
ought, if not, I ſee more cauſe to ſcorne a fearful enemie,  
that flyes the light, then he hath reaſon to moleſt or pricke  
me with a ſecret ſtinge, that am deſirous to encounter in  
an open yſſewe. But becauſe it fareth with me at this pre-  
ſent, almoſt for all the world, as with a man who meaning  
at his launching out into the Sea, onely to take the breath  
and ayre thereof, is ſuddainly transported with a ſtorme in  
to ſome forraine Coaſt, I thinke it time to make an ende  
with the third kinde of accuſers, that is, the falſe Prophets  
and their fauourites, who neither vppon ſplene againſt the  
writer,

*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

writer, nor overweening of themselves, but onely with a mortall feare, least their *Diana* should be robbed of her silver shrine, and themselves of their golden sunne, are lyke to bend their whole endeavour, with their vntermost deuise and practise of presuming witte, against contempt & scorn of their inueterate abuses. But what should we say to them whose onely drift and scope is; to deceiue, and not the vulgar sort alone, but with *Abner Clamant et inquietant regem*. Moreover, if we looke into their exercise, it is most euident that like young babies, they regarde *Sonantia magis quam solida et picta quam uilia*, Rattles that can make a kind of hollow sound, more then matters that are sound in deede, & fancies that are overcast with glaring colours, before artes that are profitable. I can not compare them better then to *Caligula*, who hauing called all hys bands and companies together by the Drumme, and caused them to march in order vpon the sandes of *Callais*, as if some great exploit had beene in hand against a common enemy, when all men were prepared for a skirmishe, commaunded them to gather Cockles: and in like sort our Diuiners dally to lesse purpose, when we presse them with most importunity. And therefore what the *Philistines* affirmed wrongfully of *Dauid*, we may truly speake of the, *Placabunt Dominum suum in capitibus nostris*, they will appease their Lord greate Ma. which is the deuill, but it shall be with prices of our heades, or of our soules perhappes, which are inestimable. 1. Re. 26. 4.

But Lord what pittie is it that no mishaps of other men that haue bene fouced ouer head and eares in this vnhappy gulfe (as shall be prooued in this worke at large) can lay the froth of wanton witte, which ariseth by distemper of the braine, and endeth with a strong commulsion from the bottome of the conscience. Experience teacheth, that



*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

the bowes waxe weaker which are euer bent, and whatso-  
euer hath not naturall and successiue rest, cannot long con-  
tinew. The beames of *Mars* himselfe the brawling God (if  
we beleue Astrologers) are parched and combust vnder  
*Sol*, the fencés are amated, as Philosophers defend, with a  
subiect that excelleth in predominaunce, and hee that la-  
boureth to ascend or mount aboue his ordinarie pitche by  
vncertayne stayes, seeketh not an eleuation, but an ouer-  
throwe. *Ad locum unde exeunt flumina reuertuntur ut ite-*  
*rum fluant*, The riuers (saith the Preacher) ebbe and returne  
backe to the place from whence they came, to what ende,  
marrie to flowe againe, but not to runne ouer bankes, for  
hee that ouer-shootes the marke, is as voide of aime, as hee  
that dribbeth and comes short of it. No man will denie,  
but *Salomon* vnderstoode exactlie, and much better as I  
thinke, then diuers of our Astrologers, *Stellarum dispositio-*  
*nes*, the dispositions or course of the Starres: but our que-  
stion is, whether he applied his vnderstanding to that ende  
which many doo, or whether there be not (*Sapientia super*  
*Stellarum dispositiones*) a wisdom farre aboue the course of  
Starres, which the witte of man is ouer-dull and blockishe  
to comprise by studdie. I would therefore willinglie  
take paine in perswading these menne to flie beneath the  
cloudes, for feare of wasting with the foolishhe Eagle (which  
went about to builde her neste, within the cyrcle of the  
Sunne) in a fruitlesse altitude. For what can it a-  
uaile a man to conquer all the world, with the peryll  
of his owne soule, which Christe hath onely saued and  
redeemed with a price inestimable. These oddes were well  
espied by *Esay*, crying out, *En ego morior et quid mihi pro-*  
*derunt primogenita*, Beholde I die, and wherein am I the  
better then for mine owne inheritance, for if these outward  
things, which are the riches of this world, be but a shadowe  
of the things which are to come, then what profit is it to  
be rich in these things, if we be not rich in the things which  
are to come.

*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

complements are nothing in comparison of health, or lyfe of the body for a time, much lesse of everlasting ioyes and life for euer. To the same effect is that of *Dauid*; *Quæ utilitas in sanguine meo dum descendo in corruptionem*, What profite is there in my bloud, when I descend into corruption, or am dissolued into ashes. For they that measure images, regard not the base whereon they stand, but their proper height, and whosoeuer will resemble man, according to the liuelie patterne whence his reasonable soule (which representeth God) was drawne, must not compare him with presumption, but deriue him with humilitie. Our diuerse fortunes may be suted best by counters, which in a large account stand for great summes, but after they are shuffled together in the bagge, are of equall value with the rest, and no more worth then their weight amounteth to, or by players on a stage, whereof some represent a King, others persons of a meane estate, and when the plaudites are past, their degrees and fauours are indifferent. But what neede we discourse of honor or degrees, when our verie liues are like to sises or waxe candles, of which some are burned and consumed to the socket in a reasonable time, others beeing tossed too and fro with a sturdie winde, begin to runne and spend a pace, and they that haue the strongest weke, holde out no longer then til the last drop of their moisture, quench the last sparke of their glorie. As we begin with weeping, proceede with pining and consuming cares, and conclude with death; so must we looke to be arraigned at the barre of equirie, tried by an enquest of Angels, and either cleared by the free gift of mercie, in the merites of our Christe, or condemned by the mouth of iustice, in the sinnes of our Fathers. In the meane time, neither hilles nor vallies, Prophecies nor Oracles, can alter that determinate and certaine course which is prefxed in the prouidence of God,

nor

Pla. 39. 11



*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

nor prognosticate of any future accident, in other sort  
then it pleaseth him to reueale by fauour; we maie change  
our vessell, as men doo commonlie that are sea-sicke; but  
not our paine, our bedde, but not our fyt, our climate, but  
not our qualitie. For he that stunted and confined vs to go-  
uernment vppon the ground, forbade vs as it were by con-  
sequer, *Ambulare in mirabilibus*, and he that made vs igno-  
raunt of many present matters for our owne behofe, would  
not entangle vs with gesses and coniectures, *De futuris*, for  
a greater inconuenience. The wise man sayth, that of  
whatsoeuer he began to thinke, it was not prophecie, but  
vanitie. The trees which are most backwarde in putting  
foorth their blossomes, prosper long, whereas Almonds are  
most commonly decayed and sterued by the frost, for put-  
ting out before their fellows. Tyll thirtie we are welcome  
to the world in the kindest manner; from that tyll fiftie  
much good doo it vs; but from fiftie foreward, is a tyme of  
taking leaue, and so God be with vs. VVherefore, I nei-  
ther count him happy, that hath not what hee looueth,  
whatsoeuer it be, nor that hath what he desireth, if it be not  
good, nor that delighteth not in that which he possesseth,  
though the thing were excellent; For he that craueth what  
he cannot compass is in paine; and he that hath atcheeued  
what he ought not to desire in faulte, and he that laboureth  
not for thinges most woorthy (in respect of their owne va-  
lue) of his paines in ignorance, of tyme past there is no  
comfort; of ioy present no staie, of chaunce future no cer-  
taintie. VVhy should not then all sortes of feined Pro-  
phetes looke into the deuilles craft, who tooke vp Christe  
into the mount, but for his owne behoofe, he pointed to  
the fayrest Citties of the world, but without a cappe or  
knee, no fauour would bee graunted: hee dealeth lyke  
an Eagle with a shelfishe, or a cunning wrestler with his  
mate,

*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

mate, in hoisting vs vp to the nicest and most tyckle point, that afterward the fall maye be more daungerous, and his praie more easie. But this could neuer come to passe, if men would fall from pride, that they might stand in grace, if they would rather mount and flie lyke byrdes, vppe to the hyll of Sion, then flicker with their wanton winges, in the vale of *Iosaphat*, if they would climbe the ladder with an Angell, not sleepe with *Iacob* at the foote: If they would looke into the workes of God, with eyes of humblenesse, not pore into the secretes of his purpose, with the spectacles of vaine glorie, if they would imagine death to be (as in deede he is) a pylote of a certayne course, and a messenger of hope, not as the paynters set him out, lyke a bare anatomic with naked bones, or as we figure and conceiue him in our fancie, with a darte of indignation. If neither difference betweene the ioyes to come, and the transitorie pleasures of this vncertaine life, nor the vvrath of God, nor the feare of hell, nor the vanity of all presuming and diuining arts, are able to remouue the Prophets from their feeble staies, I can not otherwise conceiue but that they are *Seperati in diem malum*, and shall abide the censure which is reserued for the reprobate. It is enough for me to haue made proffer of a clensing oyle, for the cure of their impostumat and filthy sores: for though they finde small ease thereby, the fault is neither in mine oyle nor me, but in the rancknesse of their angrie flesh, which swelling with abundance of ill humovrs suffers not the medicine to rest, where it may bring remedy. Wherefore to take my leaue of you (good M. Secretarie) with the same regard wherewith I first begunne, my sute is, that according to the perfect trust, which I repose more in you then others, according to the sounde conceit which I haue had; and not without good reason, of your knowledge and abilitie to

Amos. 6. 3

§. i.

iudge,



*The Epistle Dedicatorie.*

iudge, and by the freendly zeale which I professe, and euer will perfourme vnto your selfe, that it will please you to vouchsafe this full discourse against false Prophecies and Prophets, the running ouer and perusing with a single eye, and therevpon to adiudge it either to the flame, or to the print, as seemeth best in your opinion. The groundes against which I haue bent my battery, are perillous to the peace and quiet of a common wealth, the personnes which professe them are for the most parte, *Infesti regibus*, and eyther practise to keepe open woundes of disgrace & ielousie, which were first inflicted by their glozing tongues, or like Surgions and Sextines thriue, and waxe more wealthy by the dearth and plague of the cōmon people. Touching my selfe as I sayd before, though care to publish my conceite vpon this ground, induced mee to take in hand and finish this rude peece of worke, yet doo I carrie such a resolute and readie will to keepe bothe time and measure, with that musicke which contentes your eare, as further then it pleaseth you to value or esteeme the fruit, of almost one yeeres growth, it shall neuer haue any fauour, lyking, or cōsent of mine, to rush vpon the taste, or hazard of the multitude. Thus humbly crauing of almightie God, that hee will alwayes blesse you with his heauenly fauour, in as ample measure as I haue tasted of your honourable freendshippe, I recommend the first frutes of my trauaile to your good conceite, and my selfe to your deuotion. From *Howarde* house, this.6. of *Iune*.

*Your most affectionate and assured*

freend, to his vttermost during life,

*Henrie Howarde.*

# To the Reader.



*That irregulare and wilfull tyrant Custome,*  
 whose bare worde is holden and embraced as a law, con-  
 straineth me, though much against my will, to salute the  
 Reader with a breefe Epistle. For first I was neuer apt  
 by nature, to craue acquaintance of a priuate person, with  
 out bzgent cause, much lesse at randon of a multitude,  
 which neither can be visibie in one certaine place at any time, as the Ci-  
 uill lawes sette downe, nor saluted otherwise then in a kinde of generaliz-  
 ty. Where duety bindeth Pastors to enstrut a flocke, or counsaillours are  
 bounde by fee, to discourse or pleade, I can allow this course because there  
 is none other choise, but where mens scopes are francke, what grace an  
 other hath, in plotting for the fauour of a person whom he neuer knewe,  
 or perswading with so many sundry sortes of men, whose humours he did  
 neuer vnderstande, I can not well conceiue, but for mine owne part I am  
 taught by Sappho, that no note of Musique, and by Crassus that no baine of  
 Rhetorick contenteth all mens eares, that listen or apply their sences to  
 the sound or hermony. Beside, if it be thought & holden for a seruile kinde  
 of flattery, to fawne or hunt for pleasing words, whē I am sure before my  
 sute begin, to take a flatte repulse at one hand or other, I would be loth to  
 hasarde or engage my selfe, so farre within the daunger of vnthankfull  
 men, as to leaue it in theyr choise, whether they will construe & interprete  
 matters in good parte, or declaine with bitternesse. For either the worke  
 it selfe deserueth pzaile, in which case, deinty swine is rather called into  
 question, by those that haunt the Tauerne, then sette forth and graced  
 with an Iuie garlande, or els it smelleth of the sockette, and then we may  
 with as much good maner craue to be beleued in a lye, as countenanced  
 & bozne out in an ouersight: againe if the reader be so wel disposed of hys  
 owne good nature, as not to wrong himselfe by misbeeming of an other  
 mans desert, the letter needeth not, if so seuerie in setting downe a peremp-  
 torie iudgement, as entreatie can not winne his fauour, it easeth not, if so  
 wilfull as no termes of courtesy can alter him, it booteth not. Moreo-  
 uer, I haue noted and obserued in mine owne experience, that how pitt-  
 full soeuer, any pze face hath beene to the reader, if the stile & matter were  
 not worthy pzaile, small credite hath beene gotten, and on the other syde,  
 where matters are well handeled, it skilleth not in how reckelesse and se-  
 cure a manner, we prescribe of those, whom reason mouneth to be kind, and  
 the goodnes of the cause to stand indifferent. But to be short, of two things  
 it behooueth me to giue the readers warning, of what soeuer moode or  
 quallity they be. The first is, that although I meane God willing to de-  
 fende and iustify the matter of the booke, yet will I not abowe the faults,  
 which are escaped in the Printing, for most reasonable and indifferent is  
 that exception of the Pzetor Quod meo nomine gestum, non est, ratum non  
 habebo.



## To the Reader.

habebo. The seconde is a poynt of satisfaction, concerning that which being doone with good aduifement, may notwithstanding be mistaken as an error. For though I promised to make a cleare dispatch of all the reasons, that are brought in defence of Dreames, Dacles, Astrologie, coniuring, or any other meane, (from whence these prophecies are drawn) as it were in one masse or lumpe, before the winding vppe of the discourse, yet I haue vpon some better consideration of the matter, thought it to be more conuenient, that euery scruple may be satisfied and answered in hys proper place, least eyther like a braunch that is deuided from the body, it may leese the former grace, or confusion might take away the greatest pleasure and delight, or the readers may be more encombrd, because the grounds and principles, vppon which the greatest part of canillies and conceites depende, will be sworne out of memory. Thys being doone, I coule deuise to entertaine the reader with straunge properties of herbes, and stones, which neither God infused at the fyrst creating of the worlde, nor men of skill and practise in the simples haue obserued since, and therefore it must be, that eyther they haue bene abused to delight, and tickle the wilde humors of thys age, or for default of learning, in more weighty matters and discourses of more worth, haue presumed and obtruded by necessity. But when I call to minde, in howe base account such kindes of authores were esteemed in the time of Sozomen, as for want of knowledge, rather then they woulde bee silent, forged groundes and bent theyr studdies, rather to the maintenaunce of vanity, then to encrease of vertue, when I remember that we must account for euery wast and idle worde, and that such fantasies come neuer further out of season, then when graue matters are debated with authority, me thinks it is high time to leaue a wanton haunt, lamenting the discompered and sickely taile of this diseased age, which like women that are spent with a disease called the greene sickenes, preferre chalke before suger, and coales before comfittes. Thus leauing the iudgements of my secrete thoughtes, to him onely that sercheth both heart and raynes, and of my labors to the learned, I wish to the Readers as to my selfe, and to all that professe one Christ, that we may build our selues an eneralasting tabernacle, in that hill of Sion, whose Prince is Verity, whose lawes are Charity, whose limits are Eternity. Amen.

From Howarde house thys 6. of Iune.

Thine so farre as thou

art vnto truerh,

Henry Howarde.





## A defenfatiue against the poyson of supposed prophecies.

**A**Mong the manifolde and most strange aduentures, which that wily Greeke Vlisses scaped, in his voiage homeward from the siede of Troy, by the conduct of Mineruas bottome, (as the glosing Poets feigne) but rather as I iudge, by the windlesse of a crafty wit. It chaunced him after sundry stormes and perrils on the sea, to be driuen by rage of weather, vppon the Coast of Circe the great Sorceresse: no lesse redoubted for her skill in Magicke, then re- prooued for her trade in wantonnesse. Heere vppon, Vlisses speedely re- soluing with himselfe, to stay no longer in this tickle harbour of vn- stedfast trust, then was requisite and needefull, as well for repaying of hys wracks, as refreshing of his traine, was notwithstanding stopped on a suddaine, in his full Carrier, according to the common lucke of greedy Hunters, which hauing the fayre scope of theyr young desires in chase, eyther stumble vnawares into traps of treason, which suspend theyr hope, or taste the liquor of vnfounde security, which bringeth sleepe without honour. Thus fell the matter out in effect, betweene the cunning Greeke and the carnal Goddesse. for after once vnfeigned likeing and delight in the person, grace and filed speeches of the trauai- lour, had made an open breache into the Ladies heart, by the Hope of outward fight, and rash desire, which none but in experte, though sim- ple and well meaning fooles call loue, had so forcibly surprised all the forces of her minde, as neyther stone nor plant, figure nor character, Gumme nor Mineral, Astrolabe nor Ephemerides, delighted any lon- ger then. she coule apply them, to the compasse of her owne conceite, (which was the stinting of her louers spede) no practise of her pleasing arte, no proffer of greate rule, no promise of entising hopes, no char- ter of eternall happines, no meane nor manner of alutement was omit- ted, which might induce him to remaine with her, to forget the dames of Greece, to make a vertue of constraint, & to imbrace this lucke vn- looked for, as the richest & most happy lot, that was reserued in the lap of Destinie. But after it appeared by euent, that neither those bright colours, which were layd abroad to beguile the sence, nor clowdes of pleasure, nor distilling teares, nor baytes of folly, nor fruits of fauour, nor any thunderbolte of danger & disgrace, was able either to deceue or to discourage and affright a brest of Adamant, which preferreth du-



*A defensatine against supposed prophecies.*

ty before delight, suerty before sensuality, honor before appetite, and the loue which nature breedeth in all persons to theyr natie soile, before the fauours, which these luring Sirens promised in a forrayne state, thys Dame deuised sodainly to breake by force, what would not bend to fauour, & therewithall, according to the manner of bad women (for of the better sort, I neuer speake without great reuerence & due regard) diuerting the sweete compasse of her wonted fauors from the cape of hope, to the gulse of desperate reuenge, she transformed all the Marriners and Pilotes that conducted the fleete thither, into sundrye shapes of sauadge & wild beasts, according to the diuers qualities & affectation of their humors. Ylisses hauing beene inured long with stratagemes of the female kind, by practise & acquaintance with the captiue dames of Troy, discerned easily that how soeuer others seemed to susteyne the brunt, the storme was cheefely bent against himselfe: that his person had been rather spared for an other vse, the warranted or respited for terme of life: that the chance was ful of hazard, wile the dice were in a Ladies hand, and y none can lesse dispose or promise of them selues, then they that wholly linger & depend vpon the fauor of a Sorceresse. Wherefore he tooke it for a safer & a better course to dally then to loyter, to chang his colour then his counterfeit, his fancy then hys sayth, his reason then his resolution, his humour for a time then hys shape for euer: least ouer deepe disdain of graces proffered, myght enflame her wreakeful heart, to seeke reuenge in a more offensive manner.

To leuel at a marke that changeth every day, more often then the water Euripus doth ebbe & flow, seemed too wild a match for old Ylisses, to wrestle with a Lady of the Lake, which was able by the weight of her prerogatiue to comande the stars, too strong a labor for a weary trauailor: but to deteine a raging wolfe with such assurance by the eares, as neither she shold bite, nor giue iust cause of ielosity, he thought would prooue a peece of worke more fit for Hercules, & yet not faisible by any man. But as poore castawayes, which flye before the face of feare, haue seldome space to mesure, or to view the ground before they leape, as it auaieth no man aliue, to oppose the sheeld of reason against the shaft of rigor: so thys perplexed, and deeply discontented captiue, sailing daintily betweene Scilla and Charibdis, betweene hope & feare betweene the Red sea and the frozen gulse, determined to strike sayle for a while in thys narrow streight, and to giue way to the foulness of the weather, tyll eyther reason might preuaile against rage, or tyme which endeth both our cares and vs, might restore hys liberty. Favour commeth by forbearing, not by force, Wildfire is put out with Milke, Woell driueth backe the Cannon shotte, nothyng quencheth Lyme, saue Oyle, the higher any man will rayse hys toppe, the lower must he settell hys foundation, and whosoeuer seeketh to resist a Ladies edge,

*A defensitiue against supposed prophecies.*

edge, must first rebate it with humilitie. Wherefore according to the mallice of the tyme, the rage of Venus in her altitude, and the perill of his owne estate in great extremitie: Vlisles began to take out a newe ession, to chaunge his coppy, to turne another leafe, and to please her by conformitie, in rewarde whereof at length he compassed his owne desire, and obtained licence at her hande, not onely for himselfe to take his leaue: but for as manie of hys other Metamorphosid and transfourmed freendes to resume their former shape, as either coule not or woulde not counterpleade in priuate conference, that since the life of man is short and fraile, the steppes wherein wee treade vnure, the pleasures which we taste not durable, the meane whereby we reache them dangerous, the tyme of our account vncertaine, and the troubles which molest vs infinite: it is a farre more harmelesse and secure estate to lyue contented with enough, and free from checke of any Potentate, sauing nature onely, who commandeth nothing without right: then to be pricked forward dayly with a certaine spurre of kynde, or Gadbee called reason, to so many daungerous and desperat attempts, as neither suffer me to feede with pleasure to repose at ease, to range at libertye, nor to liue in order. The simple sorte, that passe away their wery dayes in silence and contempte lyke Dayies in the field: were as good to be voyde of reason altogether, as to keepe it like a Mine of treasure vnder ground without all vse. And they that are aduanced to the tipe of honour by the grace of times, and Princes, vnder and in whome they liue, are ouerwhelmed and oppressed, with so many bleeding cares, as more in number by a multitude, haue lamented with salte teares that euer they were borne to weare a crowne, then delighted with secure content in the glory of theyr Empire. Who would not expecte vpon the sight and publication of so fayre a Charter, signed with a Ladyes hande, that the filie soules which had bene long exiled from the comfort of theyr Countrey and theyr Freendes, spending the cheefe parte of theyr time in chinkes of Rockes and hollow Caues, woulde haue flocked in greate presse and thronge to resume theyr bodies?

But whether by combining with the qualities of earth, the grossest Element of all, wherein they liued and conuersed most, during this generall dismaie, or by a common error incident as well to man as to beast, in preferring pleasures which we dayly taste, before the ioyes which fleshe and blood can not discerne, or by consorting with so many Creatures, altogether voyd of reason, or by contagion of that enchanted place, or by the influence of Planets, that were retrograde, or by practise of the Sorceressie which was expert, or by what other meane it came to passe I can not tell: but custome had so farre corrupted nature, and eclipsed all the beames of grace, as almost none among



### *A defensitiue against supposed prophecies.*

so great a rowte were willing to returne to that prerogatiue, and excellence of kinde by choise from which they were estraunged by necessitie. Some complayned of the deintye sauces and deuises aboute meate and drinke, whereby men were dayly moued to exceede and surfette in theyr dyet, and by consequent distempered with a mournefull of maladies, whereas other lyuing thinges neyther wanted any sustenance that was needefull to mainteine the body nor desired any thing that was superfluous to pamper watonnesse. Others yeelded prooffe that they had alredie found more certaine cure for all diseases in the Pastures then the Poticaries shoppes, and therefore rather choose to trust the Simples of the feelde, then the Drugges of the deceitful. Another sorte reioysed at their cleere dispatch and release fro the weighty burden of aspyring thoughtes, whereby many were incited to supplant anothers hope, before they found a meane to plant theyr owne assurance. There wanted not a companie which vnder-tooke to prooue the brutish life by so much to be better and more excellent then ours, as to those which were of kinde, it was alwayes found most loouing, leaste offensiue to straungers, best contented with theyr owne estate, temperate in pleasure, abstinent from wrong, furthest from reuenge, and most streightly lincked & vnited to that golden meane which mainteineth equitie on Earth, and concorde in Paradise. One that in youth had bent his studie to the groundes of Morrall knowledg, sought to recomende this priuledge allotted by the benefite of Nature to the kindes of vnreasonable Beastes, aboue all other mentioned before, that whereas men were alwayes subiecte to the falshod and deceite of persōs whom they trusted and esteemed most, and found none other vent or passage, to the secrete thoughtes of seeming freendes, then by the laboure of the lippes, which were as often Bellowes of abuse, as messengers of trueth, al other creatures had their ennemies determined by lawes of kynde, and were no sooner hatched from the shell, or brought into the light, but they conceiued whom to feare and whom to freende, whom to shunne and whom to followe.

At last a little felie Beast called a *CHINIS*, which had bene holde & reputed as a Prophet many yeeres together in the Greekish campe, stepped forward to deliuer vpe his verdict wyth the rest, and seeming not content with that which had bene vouchied by his fellows added other reasons of his owne to lyke effect, and desired that *Vlisses* would not presse him to receiue the gift of reason, as the fauour of a freend, which experience had taught hym to avoyde and shunne, as the shipwracke of securitie. For first of all he warraunted vpon his othe, that in this little space, he had already gotten and atteyned to more certaine knowledge of the Winde and Weather, by the rule of Nature

## *A defensitiue against supposed prophecies.*

Nature onely proper to that kinde whereof he was become a member since this late Metamorphosis then the deceitfull artes of man could teach & therefore feared to be counted vaine, and altogether voyde of wit, in exchanging groundes of prooffe for shaddowes of presumption. For whereas men committed diuerse errors eyther by mistaking one cause, or one time for another, gessing without any certaine grounde, glaunsing without aime, fearing without reason, or feeling the sharpe weather in their neckes, before the proper cause were sounded to the bottome. He for his owne parte neuer swarued in deming by those markes, which were assigned and prefixed without erreure but alwaies vpon foresight by engrafted knowledge where and when the perrie would arise, withdrewe himselfe with speede into some hollowe chinke within the Rocke, till the storme were ouerblowne and the calme restored. Beside, he seemed to be verye gladd that by shaking of the weighty clogge of fraude and couine which adheareth onely to the reasonable part of man he should be free fro all attachement and arrest, to aunswer before Minos the great iudge of Hell, for the wilfull spoile of many simple soules, whom while he lyued as a Prophete in his Country, against all conscience and trueth he had most vniustly robbed of their goods, vnder this deceitfull maske of disguised prophecie. Notwithstanding yf it might haue pleased Circe to haue graunted respite for so shorte a space, he was not vnwilling to accept his humane shape and vtterance vntill hee had confuted throughly the childish groundes, whereuppon these Prophets builde theyr trade, who neuer will giue ouer this straunge Alchimie, while fooles are hasty to beleue, or wisemen slow to punish, or the bayte of guile may conceale the trecherye. Thus for the greater parte these foolish Beastes renounced vterly the benefite of Circes graunt vpon these groundes and reasons, with a number more, and seemed carefull to retyre theyr steppes from the traps and treasons of the worlde, which most commonly were bent against those that were best enclined. By which playne figure, represented for our better feeling of the falshod of thys slipper worlde, we may be mooued to lament and pittie the grosse ignorance of those, who waxing weary of the toyles and trauailes of this transitory lyfe, were very willing to retyre, but vnderstoode not whither for default of skilfull guides, had a minde or inclination to chaunge, though to the worse, and rather choose to drowne and to depresse themselues into the grossest Element, then to aduance their heartes and hopes to thar Ierusalem which lyes a loft, by the wynges of immortalitye. But farre better standes the case with vs, for though wee must confesse that to be true, which God himselfe hath published & printed by the stampe of hys Apostle S. Paule, a blessed instrument among his elect, that if



## A defensiuve against supposed propheties.

- (a)  
1. Cor. 15. 19  
(b)  
Ephe. 4.  
Colos. 4.  
2. Cor. 3.  
(c)  
1. Iohn. 3.  
(d)  
2. Pet. 1. 4

our hope were not extended beyonde the boundes and limittes of this lyfe, the very Saintes themselues considering the multitude of cares and crosses which they beare: should not onely be reputed happelisse among (a) men, but most wretched amongst beastes, yet when we call to mynde the kindenesse of our mercifull and loouing Father, who created vs not by the patterne of the Prince of erreure, but after his owne sacred (b) Image in wisdom, iustice, temperaunce and truth: gaue vs grace not onely to be called, but in very deede to be the sonnes (c) of God; made vs not much inferioure in degrees of excellencie to his holy Angells; and as S. Peter speaketh to expresse the fulnes of our glory, (d) Diuina confortes natura, partakers of the diuine nature: none but such mad fooles as determine in their hearte that there is no God, will consent in chaise with these transfourmed castawares, since Sibilla one of theyr owne Ladyes could acknowledge by her poemes, vttered in the voyce and person of almighty God *ΕΙΝΩΝ ΕΣΤΙΝ ΑΥΤΟΙΣ ΟΝΟΜΑΣΤΕ ΜΕ* &c. Man hauing a perfect rule of reason in him selfe, and taking a direct and holy counsell: is an image of the Godhead. But as it falleth out by dayly prooffe among our selues that nothing slippeth sooner out of memory, then the print of benefites receiued fro our freends: so man forgetful of his duety toward God, in recompence of many fauoures sent without deserte, hath disteyned, this bright image of the Godhead, and moreouer soiled the most holys Temple of the holy Ghosť, with a multitude of execrable finnes, & not disteyned it alone, but almost casted himselfe quite out of the booke of lyfe, and catalog of blessed Saintes, to deriue his petegree from a bastard lyne, and in a sorte to make enquire for another Father, who he might resemble in vnlawfull qualities. Of this kinde I esteeme and reckon those to be cheefe, who disdeyning in their heart that measure of humane reason which God assigned at the first to mankind (as Michol scorned Dauid, dauncing in his nakednesse before the Arke) because it is not able to aspyre aboue the clowdes, nor fownde the bottome of Gods prouidence, (which is a Foarde wherein an Oxe may wade, and a Gnatte may swim) haue hunted after Belzebub the God of Iyes, sette their faces against the Sunne, aduaunced Dagon in dispighte of the blessed Arke, shaken hands with Hell, and seeking to attaine or reach by the compasse of presuminge artes, what onely resteth in the secrete will of God himselfe, haue plunged both themselues and all others that depende vppon theyr counsell or aduise, ouer heade and eares in the pitte of infidelity.

Thys was the trade of Echimis among the Greekes, as it hath bene lykewise of many prating Sichophantes with vs, tyll very shame enforced them to waxe wearie of theyr owne abuses. It is the Cuppe of Circe spiced with conceites and fancies for the nonee, to make Vlisses his most skilfull Pilotes to renounce theyr duties. It is the playnesonge where vppon those Crotchettes stonde, which in the courses of all times and

## *A defensiuve against supposed prophecies.*

ages haue presumed to take vppē itching eares with deceitfull musike. These are the Pomgranats of that execrable Lake in Balutine, which entice a lecherish and wanton eye to plucke; but are no sooner touched with the finger, but they dissolve to Ashes.

To conclude this gelling and deuining after accidentes to come, is the quintessence of Medeas Limbecke: which distilleth at the first into the vaynes with ease; and afterwarde breaketh out with vttermoste extremitie. Wherefore since Echinis had neyther leaue nor leysure to discrye the poyson of our glosinge prophecies, whose leaues are lies, whose fruites are fruitlesse, whose groundes are false, and whose euentes are mischeuous: I will not sticke to perswade by my laboure what it seemes hee woulde as gladly haue begonne with his, and by discredite of the Fountaines whence these vanities haue sprunge, embattell truth with a wall of Adamant.

Nowe first of all; whereas some Writers more precisely (then were requisite vppon so false a ground) haue deuined thys deuining trade or facultie, on whatsoeuer els we list to terme it, (so we make not y an arte which hath not any certaine or yndoubted grounde or principle where vppon to rest) into diuers kinds, wherof some are gotten by great diligence in studie, others as it were inspired and infused from the roote of nature, I entende to take a shorter, and more ready way: because my reasons may be so much the better vnderstoode, reiecting without any difference, whatsoeuer kinde of prophecie presumeth to diuine, or aime at any future accidente, whose meanes are not alredie sette on worke: but meerely to come, without knowledge of the next most naturall & moste proper causes.

Provided alwayes, that thys generall restraint be not extended to such extraordinarie visions and reuelationes, as haue chaunced both before and vnder the lawe of Moses, and in like manner since the time of grace, for direction of the spouse of Christe, which is the Church (for who dare binde or manacle the handes of him that made all the world?) and yet these thinges are not to bee receyued and embraced ouer-hastelye, as seales and warrauntes of the wyll of God, without they bring the marke and stampe of lawfull prophecie, wherof I meane by the grace of God to discourse at large, when I drawe to the wyndynge and knitting vppe of the matter. Neyther ought thys generall reproofe of all dysuining misteryes, further then the knowledge of the proper and true causes will permitte, to be taken as an erreure lately sette on broache by me, since the strongest Patrons and defenders of the same, haue beene sundrye tymes enforced to retyre and shrinke backe to theyr Trenches, by the vollyes of approoued argumentes. Touching childish follyes couched & comprised in the braunches of this body, which the deuill hath adorned & set foorth with his brightest collours of abuse, to procure a greater reuerence & re-



## *A defensitiue against supposed prophecies.*

garde to lyes, because it is scant possible for any man to recount them all which hath not bene an enterc ſmoner amonge the Satires of the woode, or of priuie counsaile with greate Pan himselfe, it shalbe light inough to deeme by these which are layde open to the common view of all the world, what pith or vertue may be drawne out of the rest, or what regarde of duety and sinceritie they beare to God, which are not a shamed in so badde a cause, to pretende a wetherbeaten visarde of antiquitie.

The method which I purpose by the grace of God to keepe in this discourse, shall first deliuer after the manner of a brieue discouery the causes that induced man to suspende his hope vppon such toyces of vnstedfast trust, as neyther promise comfort in the present, nor assurance in the future. Then will I make it euident by full disprooffe of all

those kindes of Prophecie whereunto the people is addicted mooste what empty Cesterns haue bene digged by the laboure of vngodlye wittes, and how much sooner any man may drowne a (a) Ioseph in the leaste of them, then take (b) vp a Ieremie. Afterward I meane to shew

(a)  
Gen. 37. 10

(b)  
Iere. 38. 10.

good reasons to the learned in the lawes of God, why not onely in the respect of duety and obedience to the statutes of the Lande, as diuers thinke, but euen of zeale and duety towards God, all they that wyll persist in Iesus Christe, are no lesse bounde to flye the denne of Prophets then the stewes of Dalida, for the lippes of both are like a dropping Honey combe, and their throates more bryght then Oyle, but theyr tounge as sharpe as any sworde, and theyr endes more bitter then Wormewoode. Vppon these premisses it must by consequent appeare, what kinde of Prophets may be suffered in a godly common wealth, and which is the infallible touch and right stampe of Prophecie, about which poynt, I meane God willing to take paine, after once the reasons wherevppon the weighte and substaunce of the cause dependes, haue bene enlarged. Last of all this treatise shall be sealed vppe with a full and perfecte aunswer, to such seeming verities and deceitfull reasons as haue bene vsed in defence of diuers kindes of prophecie, to deceiue the vulgare sorte, which haue an eye to see, and an eare to heare, but no skill to iudge, nor learning to dissolue the doubtles, and scruples which are dayly scattered abroad by the malignant aduersarye. This I conceiue to be no lesse then the weight of the cause requires, as much as may suffice the moderate and gentle spirites which endeouore not so much to cauille as to vnderstande, & a greate deale more then the strongest Proctors of the other side shall be able with a Legion of Familiars to aunswer, not in respecte the reasons issewe from my Penne which may swerue in choise, but out of the bosome of trueth her selfe, *Quæ magna est et preualet*, which is greate and preuaileth,

3. Esd. 4. 4

Fyrst

### *of supposed prophecies.*

First therfore, whosoeuer peizeth & esteemeth things not as they seeme but as they are, can not deny that pride of nature, with an inward eagernes to perke aboue the state and calling, wherein we were created at the first, according to the likenes, but not in equalitie with God himself: inspired the first sparke of life into the mindes of all diuining whisperers. For after Sathan that slye Sépent & professed enemie to man, being far more subtil & more wilie the all other creatures (euē as his offspring are at this day, more wise according to the iudgemēt of the world, that is in theyr generatiō, then the sons of light) perceiued & discouered by watching at an inch, that notwithstanding God had planted our forefathers in the ioyes of Paradise, yet still he left them in a liberty to choose eyther good or bad, and tenauntes in this blessed state but onely duringe theyr good demeanoure, not for terme of life: founde out no better sleight to trippe them at theyr entrie into this double course, and to deiect the vterly from the tipe of happines, then by prompting and suggesting scruples of suspect and ielousie, to the mindes of these wel meaning soules, as if God with a kinde of enuie, had forbidden them to meddle with this deinty fruite, foreseeing that soorthwith vpon the tast thereof, their eye sight shoulde be cleared, and the filme remooued in such sorte: as they might not onely discern betweene good and euill, which was not possible so long as they remayned in this caue of ignorance, but beside, they shoulde be tanquam Dij like Gods, and as it were coequall vnto theyr Creator, wherevpon we haue to note, that the marke wherewith our first Parents roued, was equality with God: the bow wherewith they shot, vaine glory: the shaftes, aspiring thoughtes fettered with mis-beleeefe, and drawen out of the quier of vnconstancie: the winde which caried them beyonde the marke, was contempte of God, Sathan himselfe gaue aime, the Woman (as the weaker vessell) vndertooke to make the wager, and Adam by lending his ambitious and itching eares to lyes, was abused before he could descrie the perrill: remorse with shame and horror, to present themselues before the face of God vpon so foule a fact, strooke vp the game, the price was banishmēt from blisse, til the blessed seede of another Woman and a seconde Eue, shoulde crushe and bruse the selfe same serpents heade, which was so proude a counsailloure to disobedience, till Christ the Sonne of Eue according to the flesh, should restore vs to the place from whence we fell, dissolue the chaines of Hell, wherein the godly were deteyned euer since the committing of thys fault, and leade captiuitie captiue. Thus by the promise of more glory then was due: we lost the fauoure which was assigned by meere mercye, by staring on the Sunne: we lost the benefite of common sence, by desiring to know much: we grewe to know nothing, and though the Deuill vndertooke to warraunt vs that we shoulde be as Gods: yet we must dye like men, our breath is in our nostrilles, and

B.j.

there



## A defensatine against the posson

August.in  
Hipognost.

xxcelint 4. Ed. 7. 41

1. Cor 15. 22

Esay. 14. 15

Lactant. de  
vera relig.

(a)  
1. Reg. 5. 3.

there is no comfort in Samaria, Eua enim a diabolo mutuauit peccatum. &c. For Eue, saith S. Augustine, tooke vppe sinne from Sathan as it were by lone, vppon her owne bare word, her husbände by consenting vnadvisedly, subscribed to the bonde, vsura creuit posteritati, but the burthen of the lone or interest, hath euer lyen and euer shall in the neckes of theyr posteritye. O quid fecisti Adam? &c. O Adam what hast thou done? for though the fault were onely thine, yet the fine is ours, and as we taste euen by the sharpest sauce of our owne experience, In Adam, omnes morimur, we dye all in Adam &c. But why should I so much presse this president of a fraile and corruptible man, since Lucifer one of the brightest starres in heauen, saying in his heart, before the foundations of the world were layde (as diuers of the best Diuines affirme) that he woulde ascende vppe into the Heauen, exalte his throne aboue the starres of God, sitte in the Mount of the testament, in the sides of the North, and be like vnto the highest: was deiected from his scaling Ladder into hell, and sleepeth with the vncircumcised. This was both the roote, and the reward of comparing wyth the mighty stroke, and wyde stretching armes of God, and of presumptuous laboure, to enquire and search the bottome of conceled misteryes, which ought to lye most secrete in the decke, tyll the tyme wherein it pleaseth him to publish and reueale them, eyther in his iudgement or his mercy. The Paynimes gaue more reuerence to the feyned Gods, then this amounteth to, they lyued in a greater awe, and seemed more to tremble at supposed Maiestie, then we doe at the presence of the true God of Hostes, as appeareth plainly by theyr figures. For what gained Pan, by comparing with Apollo? Arachne with Minerua? Silenus with Mercurie? what gayned Semele, by the sighte of Bacchus the God of cuppes, though she were his paramore? Phaethon by managing the Teeme of Phebus, though he were hys Father? Icarus by mounting vpwarde with hys wynges of waxe, though directed by Dedalus? Farfalla the poore flye, by sporting with the flame, though for exceeding loue to light, the Byrde that built her nest within the circle of the Sunne for sure defence, the Satires that presumed but to kisse the Coles, which Prometheus had kindeled in token of humilitie? The lightning striketh at the toppes of mountaynes, the Pine-aples & Ceder trees are most subiect to the winds, Et plus plerunque habent ad ruinam, ponderis quæ sunt altiora. Beside, if God should alwayes vtter and reueale his misteries, by ordinary course of arte: he were no God [sayth Plato] or yf man were made acquainted with the secretes of his prouidence, by the gyft of Nature, they mighte claime the cheefe prerogatiue of high diuinitye: wherefore some thinges he reuealeth, as a carefull father to expresse his looue, others of more moment he cõcealeth, as a ielous God to represent hys glory. The (a) vailed Arke, was to the Leuites health and comfort in distresse, but to the Philistines a Cockatrice in the brunt of their calamities: whyle it rested in the Church,

*of supposed prophecies.*

Church, a warraunt of Gods holy presence, while it wandered among idolaters, a (b) messenger of indignation. The light which shined before Paule made him blinde for a season, that he might see for euer, & so great was the maiestie of God among the Iewes, so long as they remained sted fast in the couenaunt: as while it shined in the sacred place, not one among the Priestes durst eyther (c) steppe within the same, or (d) minister. The Disciples wondered to finde Christe conferring with a Schismaticke of Samaria, considering the Iewes refuse to deale with such: and yet not one would aske (e) *Quid quæris, aut quid loqueris cum ea*, what enquire you or what mooueth you to talke with her? Peter was not suffered to know what should (f) become of Iohn, neither durste S. Paule himselfe presume to wade more deeply then discretely in the streame of prouidence. The most that Iacob gained by tugging and contendyng with an Angell all the night, for any thing I finde, was losse of sleepe, with the (g) shrinking of a sinnewe. If thou serch too deepe [sayth Esdras] thou shalt deeply wonder, and why so? the reason followes, (h) because neyther can thine eye be satysfied with sight, nor thyne eare wyth hearing, wherfore the counsell which the Preacher gyueth, to (i) confine and stint our wisedome within certaine bounds is passing sound, againe in (k) *pluribus Domini operibus, non esse curiosū*, not to be ouer curious or inquisitiue about the sundry woorkes of the almighty, not to (l) aspire to things which cannot be attayned by the frailty of our nature, nor to make enquirie after hydden mysteries, that are too deepe for vs. The sence of mā is ouer shallow for so deep a foord, which made S. Paule crye out *O altitudo* to the Romaines. Lactātiū inueighes exceedingly against al those, whose chiefe delight and exercyse, it is Inconcessa scrutari to serch for vnlawfull thynges, and Tacitus in rippying vppe the causes which induced a young Gentleman called Libo, to repayre vnto such prophetes as wee blame for counsel, touching thinges to come: termes them *Stolida et vana, vel si mollius accipias misera*nda, foolish and vaine thinges, or if wee list to construe them with greater fauour, or in a milder sorte, matters that mooue not so much admiration as pittie. Who seekes for knowledge eyther in despight, or by maner of comparison with God: is like to speede as wel as Hipseles Dogges that barked at the Moone, or as Aristotle our graunde Philosopher, who cast himselfe into the riuer Nilus, as some write because he could not finde by any laboure or enquirie, frō what heade it yssued into Egypt. It greued him exceedingly to confesse his ignorance, in any poynt that might be serched out, or attayned to by the wit of man: and yet a certaine learned father is of the mynde, that lyght footing maketh better speede in so deepe a sande. *Et plus sapere interdum vulgus, quod quantum opus est sapiat*. And the vulger sorte may be reputed wiser oftentimes in this, that they are no wyser then they ought to be. We must remember that poore Bethelem, which

B.ij.

was

(b)  
1. Iud. 5, 9,

(c)  
2. Par. 5, 14,

(d)  
2. Par. 7, 4,

(e)  
Ioh. 4, 27,

(f)  
Ioh. 21, 22,

(g)  
Gen. 32, 31

(h)  
4. Esd. 14 26

(i)  
Pro. 23, 4,

(k)  
Eccl. 3, 22,

(l)  
Eccl. 45, 23

de falsa sap.  
lib. 2. ca. 10

Annal. li. 2.

Lactan. de  
orig. err.



## *A defensative against the poison*

- was a Village least accounted of among the Jewes: became the brauest of them all, according to the sentence of the Prophet Miche, whereas proude and scornfull Capernaum, for presuming to aspyre and perke aboute the clowdes, according to the sentence of our Sauour (a) *Qui se exaltat &c.* was brought downe to nothyng God looued Dauid for hys playne simplicitie and singelnesse of heart, and tourned all the practise & deuise of false (b) Achitophel into smoke: he picketh out the follies (c) of thys world, to confound the polliticke: he graunteth wise dome vnto those that are not high minded but captiuate, theyr reason to hys rule, and as we reade in Barnarde, liketh better of that ignorance in nice and deyntry mysteries, which confesseth but presumeth not: the of a braulyng kind of knowledge, which presumes but vnderstandeth not. Non (d) est necessarium, it is not necessarie sayth the Preacher, to beholde those thynges wyth our eyes, which are concealed in a cloude or vnder a mistye vayle, and that for two causes. The first for that (e) *futura nullo sciri possunt nuntio*, things which are absolutely to come can not be learned or enquired out by any messenger, and then because it is as cleere as trueth it selfe, that (f) *Qui scrutator est maiestatis, opprimetur a gloria*, he that is a sercher of the diuine maiesty, shall be daunted and oppressed by the brightnesse of hys glory. This may be one, although perhaps not the sole or onely cause, why God commaundyng that none but Aaron and hys sonnes should set theyr foote with in the sacred Vaultes and secrete places of the Temple, stinteth vulgare persons within such narrow boundes: as he woulde not suffer them to pry or peepe at any thing within, vppon paine of death, before the same (g) weare folded vp with reuerence. In (h) Egypt they that were moste perfect and precise in the trade of prophecie, woulde not affoorde the perfect skyll thereof to any other, then (h) theyr cheefest God: as yf it were a gyft of too great valewe and account, to be communicated vnto such base kindes of men, as myght eyther be withdrawen and wrested by the force of tyrannie, from the rule of trueth, or abused by the vaile of ignoraunce, or corrupted by the baite of honour. S. Paul aduiseyth all men, rather to be (i) timerous, then ouer bold: which the Preacher calleth, *Tantum sapere quantum* (k) *necesse est*, to be no wiser then is requisire, least we be amazed. Elias vnderstoode no more of future things, then it pleased God by fauour to reueale: as appeareth by the manner of his dealing with the Sunamite, (l) *Dominus celauit, mea & non indicauit mihi*, God hath concealed this from mee saith the Prophet, and hath not declared it. The Aungell which was sent to Esdras (m) could say nothing touching life, and in the word of God, it is expresse as a principle, that they which (a) lyue vppon the ground, cannot attaine to perfect knowledge of the things that are aboute. (b) *Corpus enim quod corrumpitur, aggrauat animam, &c.* for
- (a) Mat. 11, 23.  
(b) 1. Par. 29, 27.  
(c) 1. Cor. 1, 27.  
(d) Eccl. 3, 23.  
(e) Eccl. 8, 7.  
(f) Pro. 25, 27.  
(g) Num. 4, 20.  
(h) Hero. lib. 2.  
(i) Rom. 11, 20.  
(k) Eccl. 7, 17.  
(l) 4 Reg. 4, 17.  
(m) 4. Esd. 4, 52.  
(a) 4. Esd. 4, 2.  
(b) Sap. 9, 15.

## of supposed prophecies.

the drosse of this corruptible body, maketh the soule more ponderous. God (c) iudgeth not as man, neither can his counsellors be comprised within the (d) compasse of our fraile capacitie. The mother of our Prophecies is pride, the sister emulation, the grandame vile ingratitude: and therefore according to the nature of the (e) roote, we deeme of the braunch, and as the Prophet speaketh (f) Sicut mater & filia, as the dam is, so prooues the daughter. To challenge more than falleth to our part to play, is for all the world, as if a man would saile against the streame of order, & the winde of prouidence. For though the scriptures call vs goddes sometimes, because we are the sonnes of God by adoption and grace: yet our dayes are numbered, and the pleasures of this life shall haue an ende, because we were the sonnes of Adam by transgression. The glorie of this world is smoke, the wisdomes follie, the delights vnstedfast, the desires irresolute, and the very life it selfe, from which, as from the distaffe of the destinies, so many miseries and great mishappes are dayly sponne, is so brittle and vn Timer: as in the word of God it is compared often to the print of an arrowe in the aire, of a vessell in a running streame, of a visage in a glasse, what would you more? to a blast, a bubble, a flower, a pilgrimage, a vapour and a shaddow. Wherefore, as it were a foolish bargain, to purchase all the worlde with hazarde of our soules, so were it in all pointes as great and grosse an ouersight, to seeke helpe where no trueth is founde, or to preferre the perking Cedars, which gaue shaddowe to the wicked Priestes of Baal and Astaroth, before the feelie Goord, vnder which the Prophet Ionas slept in hys way to Niniuie. By this we see, the first original of mens vn Timer labours, to diuine of accidents to come, and that before the plumes of peeuish pride, which is defined by Saint Augustine, to be: Peruersa celsitudinis appetitus, the coueting of peruerse height or dignitie betrailed in the dust (or rather ashes) of repentaunce and humilitie: the deuill will not cease to egge vs in the wonted manner, to the search of mysteries vn Timer, and making bolde comparisons with the almightie: but whosoever hath beene trained by sincere aduise, and taught to stoupe downe to the lure of an humble heart, shall neuer want a succour and secure defence in the foulest weather.

Another cause, which driueth men to seeke for these deceitefull remedies: is deepe mistrust and diffidence in God himselfe, which tendeth to the wracke of soules, and derogation from his most diuine and sacred Maiestie. For if our trust were wholie planted in the feare and loue of him, if we thought he were as willing by his mercie as able by his might, to refresh our labours and relecue our wantes, if we were perswaded that his sinewes could not shrinke, and that not one can perish, which delighteth in the shaddow of his holy winges:

B.iii.

we

*The glory of this world is smoke, the wisdomes follie, the delights vn Timer, the desires irresolute, and the very life it selfe, from which, as from the distaffe of the destinies, so many miseries and great mishappes are dayly sponne.*



## *A defensatiue against the poison*

we would not lurke and loutour in the crasie bulwarkes of vnstable  
 hopes, which are compared aptly by the Prophet Nahum, to the shel-  
 ter of a naked hedge in a frostie night, nor repose the weight of all  
 our fortune in this life and fauour in the next, vppon a staffe of reede  
 which peirceth through their handes, that leane vppon it with assu-  
 red confidence. May we not demaunde of flesh and blood, what coul-  
 our of in-iustyce it could euer finde in the holy one of Israell, where-  
 by it might be moued to forsake the beaten path of single truth, and  
 pursue the tracks of vncertayne wandrynge? Was it Baal, that in the  
 day time went before the people in a pyller of a Cloude, and by night,  
 of fire, because they shoulde not want hys ayde at any neede: or rather  
 he that made both Baal and all hys Priestes, to sweate and broyle by  
 the presence of hys Prophete? Why then shoulde (a) Saule forsake the  
 lawfull mynisters of truth, to craue aduise and counsell of the Sorce-  
 resse? Why should vnfaithfull Asa, gyue more credite to the (b) rules  
 of phisicke, then to the promise of Iehoua? Why should wycked Ocho-  
 zias demaund resolutyon touchyng hys recouerye, of (c) Belzebub the  
 God of Acaron, when the holy one of Israell is alwayes ready to attende  
 theyr cries, that depende vppon hys fauoure? Why shoulde Achab pre-  
 ferre the dreames of Zedechias, before the message of the Prophet Mi-  
 che, (d) from the very mouth of God: because he woulde not grease his  
 head with Oyle, as the Prophet (e) Dauid speaketh by assentation,  
 nor content him in his humors? Why should the Centurion, which vn-  
 dertooke the charge of conducting Saint Paule to Rome, beleue the  
 (f) maister of the ship which had lost his marke in fowle weather, be-  
 fore the blessed Apostle: whose worde was a certaine Oracle to the Mi-  
 nisters of God in their aduersitie. We are not ignorant, that none can be  
 so mightie as the God that made vs, nor is like to be so kinde, as that  
 louing father which hath fedde vs from our tender youth: and yet the  
 malice of our sinnefull nature is so preposterous and beetle blinde, that  
 rather then the pride and wantonnesse of flesh, shall want a sillye proppe  
 to vndershore the ruines of olde Adams walles: the verie soule it selfe  
 which Christ hath sealed with the signe of Tau, and redeemed by the  
 merites of his death, shall paye for it. The deuill drawes his knowledge  
 from the sufferance of God, and therefore what a follye were it to de-  
 pend vpon the tytle of a tenaunt, which holdes neither by foccage nor  
 Knightes seruice, but by curtesie and sufferance at will: when wee may  
 take a state from the Lord of Lordes (if we list to paye the fine of our  
 repentaunce) not for our selues onely, nor for the space of one and twen-  
 tie yeere: but for our heires for euer? who craueth fauour at the gao-  
 lers hand, that may receiue it from the Prince? or who thirsteth for the  
 pittes, that may drinke at the fountaine? Væ enim illis cū ego ab eis re-  
 cessero. For woe be vnto them saith God by the Prophet Osee, when I  
 haue

Nah. 3. 6.

4. Reg. 18.

21.

Exo. 13. 22.

(a)

1. Reg. 28. 6.

(b)

2. Par. 16. 12

(c)

4. Reg 1. 3.

(d)

3. Reg. 22.

27.

(e)

Psal. 140. 5.

(f)

Act. 27. 11.

Ose. 9. 2.

*of supposed prophecies.*

haue departed from them, that is, when I haue giuen them ouer. Our God is a ielous God, he will not be serued nor honoured by halfes, neither will he resigne his glorie to another: no man can serue two Masters that drawe sundrie wayes, wee can not holde both of God and Mammon: for the cleauing and adhearing vnto one, is the quite and absolute renouncing of another. There is no fellowshippe betweene light and darkenesse, betweene Christ and Beliall, betweene faith and infidelitie, betweene the Temple of God and Idoles, betweene the table of God and of Deuils. The worde of God, forbiddeth vs to weaue one garment both of Wollen and Linnen, to plowe with an ox and an Asse, to serue GOD and Baal, to halt on both sides, to be neither hotte nor colde, to dwell both in Sion and Samaria, in Ierusalem and Iericho: for, Cor vnum, via vna, there is, but one heart and one way sayeth Ieremie, and to the like effect speaketh another Prophet, both God and his name shall bee one, &c. The Scriptures vtterly reiect all those that make flesh their arme, & how much more that wicked crew, which make hel gates their horrifon: for better is one cluster of grapes in Ephraim, the dropping vintage of Abiezer, better a poore lodge in Bethel, then a piramides in Egypt: better the roome of a Porter in the house of God, then a golden Pallace in the kingdome of the reprobate. Our hearts ought to bee sincere and single in the sight of God, as Rechabs was to Iehu, if we looke to be aduanced and lifted vp into the carre of honour: God abhorreth those that can both laugh and weep, frowne and flatter, glose and sting together, and at once vnder one paynted visarde, & double faced Ianus of hypocrisie. Rebecca being wonderfully greeued and perplexed, with the ciuill strife which she felt within her wombe: repaired vnto God himselfe for counsell, who reuealed his intent and purpose in that myserie. The cheefest holde and shoote-anchor, that godly Iudas founde in the surges of distresse: was to aduance both heart and handes to God alone, who sendeth many greuous plagues for proofoe and triall of our faith, that afterward he may be moued in his mercie, to reward it with an ouer-running measure. Thus dealt Dauid, Iosias, Ezechias, with the generall consort of Gods chosen Saints, when eyther they were tempted by their home-bred enemy, inflamed with the rage of emulation, or assaulted by the world: which dooth and euer will, protest hir selfe a kinde and tender (a) mother to the wicked, but a cursed and malignant stepdame to the godly. Peter woulde repaire for Counsell, to none other then to the sonne of God himself, which had the (b) woord of life: because he knewe, that onely Christ must be the pilote of his course, and the porte of his entrie. We knowe that God is alwayes neere at hand, to all that call vpon him with a constant (c) faith, he commaundeth vs to raunge no further, then his lawe prescribeth, for (d) intel-

Efai. 42. 8.

2. Cor. 6. 15.

2. Cor. 10.

21.

Iere. 32. 29.

Zach. 14. 9.

Iud. 8. 2.

Gene 25. 3.

2. Par. 20. 12

Ioh. 15. 19.

Ioh. 6. 68.

Soph. 3. 3.

*Sinceritie*



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

- (d) intelligence of things to come. Ad (e) legem potius & testimonium, &c. rather should come to the lawe and testimonie of his owne mouth: because to (f) vtter or discouer straunge and newe things, before they come to passe, he claimeth as a parcell of diuine prerogatiue. It is God that hath created man, as a scholler in this life to learne, man hath not made himselfe, as a maister, to commaunde, or countermaunde, what is about his horison: his handes haue cast the world as it were in a moule, and stretched out the skirtes of heauen, like a robe of Maiestie. The desires of men are light, the markes whereby they take their aime not stable, and the gesses of a rouing head are infinite. I denie not, but a messenger from a (g) forraine land, as we reade in Salomon, is like a cuppe of colde water to a thirstie soule: but we must take great heede withal, that this messenger be sent from (h) God, that his errand be inspired from aboue, not coyned for a purpose, and that the messlage be not of that kinde, whereof the Spanish prouerbe speaketh: Da luengas vias, luengas mentiras, from long iourneyes, large lyes are afforded, &c. for like soyle like seede, like flower like fruite, like labourers like husbandrie, like lippes like lettice, and where the grounde worke is not sure, the frame which resteth and is built vpon the same, can not be durable. Men sought not God, sayeth the Prophet, and (i) therefore they could not vnderstand: as if he should haue taught in plainer termes, that blindness were the iust rewarde of incredulitie. In this respect Saint Iames (k) aduise vs, to seeke wisdom if we want it, at the hande of God, and why not by another meane? The reason is set downe by Salomon, because (l) Ex ore eius sapientia: and whosoever walketh with any other staffe, may wander, but he cannot profite. We finde, that Saule had no sooner shaken of his priuie coate, of confidence and trust in God: but he was deadly wounded with one dart of mortall sinne, and eftsloones with another, till at the length he waxed deafe, in stopping his indurate eares against the call of God, according to that rule of Salomon. The wicked man, which hath beene pludged once in the depth of sinne: beginneth to despise, but shame and dishonour followe, Propter hoc enim, &c. For in this respect sayeth Paul, the wrath of God descended vpon the children of distrust and incredulitie: which by no greater measure of true faith, then one graine of mustard seede amounteth to, might haue remooued mountaines. In like sort those wilfull men, which (as the Prophet writes) declining from that constant hope, which is the salue of discontented mindes, cryed out in furie, Desperauimus, are laid foorthwith to thrust there handes among the thornes of voluntarie finnes: protesting that from that time forward, they would execute the peeuishe mallice of their heartes, and liue after their owne fancie. Thus, when wee flie before the face of wanton feares, wee slippe into the gulfes of reprobation: from whence it is not possible to scape, till the last man be borne, and the last see

### *of supposed prophecies.*

fee discharged. If God be on our syde: we neede not feare who skirmish in our face: if not, we stryue against the streame, and vnadvisedly consume and cast away that seede, which being better vsed and employed, might bring forth fruite fūe hundred folde, &c. For as the Fygge tree which was cursed by the mouth of God himselfe, brought forth leaues without fruite, and as S. Iude complayneth of the flitting clowdes which promised, but let fall no rayne: so doubtlesse, the glozyng prophecies of wycked men, are a kynde of science which was neuer grafted by our heauenly Father, and therefore can be good for no man that is wel affected. Christ was content to dye for hys mortall enemies, and will he not direct the compasse of hys freendes? Hee bare the burthen of our sinnes, which was the greatest and most greuous of all other: and wyll he not regarde our humble sute, when we depende vppon hys prouidence? Hee rent the vaile, that all men might haue free passage, and accesle vnto the seate of grace: and hath he left none other Lanterne, to direct our steps in stony wayes, then prophecies of addle heades, which neyther agree with his expresse will in other things, nor our behoofe in these, with his honour nor our duetie? Yes certainly, the selfe same charter which concludeth, that the godly King Iosias therefore loued God sincerely: because he banished (a) Pithones & Ariolos, Soothsayers, and such as diuined by Familiars, as we call them out of the land, wyll lykewise iustifie this principle of Lactantius a learned father of the Church, that whosoever dealeth in thys manner: (b) vitam et salutem immolauit, hath sacrificed both hys life and his saluation. Where vnto we may likewise adioyne the verditte of Chrysostome, that to esteeme and make account of such diuining whysperers, as raise a gaine of hipocrisie: is (c) to make flatte shipwracke of that seruice and obedience to God, which we promised in baptisme, for he that will be aduised by a Prince of error, [sayth S. Barnarde] saue without a lawfull meane, or conducted by vnskillfull guides: is not sound but sicke, not wise but wilfull, not in state to prosper, but in case to perish. Let vs put the case, that for punishment of incredulitie, God woulde cast vs off, as sometime he dyd the Iewes: woulde Sathan [thinke we] take vs into garde? who by the mallice of a spoylinge nature, wanders vppe and downe like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may deuoure, and would vndoubtedly, make hauocke in the folde of Christ, if prouidence had not already curbed, and restrained him so shorte: that he can not steppe nor start one inche, beyond the boundes and limits which are appointed as a layle or prison of iniquitie. S. Augustine compareth the Deuill in his greatest ruffe and iolitie, to those eager labourers, which digging at the mettalls, want neither will nor instruments, as mattocks, spades, &c. to reach euen to the center of the soyle if it were possible: and yet for all that, neyther they, nor Sathans ministers, whych are alwayes mining

Matt. 21. 19.

Iud. 12.

(a)

4. Rc. 23. 32

(b)

Lact. de ori.

err. lib. 21,

cap 17,

(c)

Chrysost. in

diuers. ho-

mil. 7,

1. Pet. 5, 8,



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

ning in the dealings of thys worlde, dare presume to digge more deepe or wyde, by the bredth of one strawe, then God which is the mayster, or hys Aungels, which are ouerseers of the worke, will suffer them.

(a)  
Iob. 1, 12.

The Deuill durst not for his eares attempt the spoyle of (a) Iob, before he had obteyned leaue of God himselfe: and then but for a tryall of his vertue neyther, and with this restraint, that howsoeuer he were vsed with his goods, which were but chippes and fortunes tennise-balles: ne manum in illum extenderet, that he shoulde not in any wyse, stretch foorth his hande against hys person. He could not rushe into a filthy hearde of swine without a speciall (b) graūt: although this kinde of cattell, were the fittest of all other, to lodge and entertaine a muddy guesst, that delighteth in nothing that is pure and holy. Man may be retrograde in the course of vertue, but God is faithfull, and permitteth no man to be (c) tē-  
(b)

Max. 8, 31,

(c)  
1. Cor. 13,

(d)  
2. Pet. 2, 9,

(e)  
Baruc. 6. 35.

ted aboute hys strength: he knowes aswell the meane, to deliuer his elect & chosen frō the danger of assaulte, as to reskew the wilful til the (d) day of dreadfull sentence to be punished. Wherefore, I may be bold to speake of this kinde of prophets, as (e) Baruch doth of idoles, to the same effect, though in an other sort. They deliuer not the feble frō the strong: they saue no man from death: they restore nor the blynde to sight, nor com-  
(f)

Ier. 4, 21,

(g)  
Ioh. 10, 21,

(h)  
Luk. 11, 17,

(i)  
Rom. 8, 28

(k)  
2. Par. 19, 11,

(l)  
1. Thes. 2, 5,

(m)  
1. Cor. 6, 12,

(n)  
Osee. 7, 3,

(o)  
Ioh. 8, 44,

fort any man in misery, to conclude, Nullū Dei opus cum illis, there is no worke of God, nor signe of grace amonge them: and therefore they may be recounted among those, which are wise in mischief, as we reade in (f) Ieremy, but can doe nothing that belongs to godlinesse: we may deeme by the fruites which follow. For (g) Nunquid Demon potest aperire oculos? can a Deuill open or vnseale your eyes, sayth our Sauour Christ in the gospel? no, rather wyl he bleare them with a miste of errour. Is it possible for any man, to cast out deuils in the name of Belzebub, the greate fiende of hell? no, that were against all reason, since (h) no state nor regiment, which is deuided in it selfe, can long continue. We confesse with S. Paule, that to those that looue God faithfully, & as they ought: all thinges (i) turne to good, but note withall, that doth neuer otherwise assist hys seruauntes, then (k) in bonis, in good thinges: and therefore we may prooue much, but we must (l) hold the best, & though all thynges bee lawfully, in that sence which the Scripture meaneth: yet all thinges are not (m) expedient, in that maner which our heart desireth. Our names were gyuen vppe to God in baptisme, at what time wee made an entrie to the way of lyfe: and therefore, wee may neither turne to the left hand, nor the right, but they that haue receiued earnestte from the Deuill take an other course, and a singuler delight, in makynge Princes (n) merry wyth theyr mallice, as the prophet speaketh, and the people with theyr leasing. The Deuill is a lyer, and a (o) father of that facultie: hys ende is horror: his meane abuse, & hys purpose mischeefe. May we gather figges of a Thistle, grapes of a bryer, or roses of a nettell?

I think

## *of supposed prophecies.*

I thinke not. Can we finde a rightwise man in Tyre, or a chaste virgyne in Sodome? much lesse no more is it possible, for vs to reape any godly fruite or benefite, by any kynde of counsell or aduise, that proceedeth from the practise of a common enemy, further then as sometime it pleaseth God, to transerre the mallice of a froward heart, to the sauегarde and protection of his seruantes: as in the sale of Ioseph into Egypt: in the drift of touning Balams curse against the rebobate: in redeeming all mankind from hell: by that dishonourable death vppon the curse, which was inflicted vpon the guilty (a) Ephraim went to Assur, sayth the prophete, and to the wrekefull king: but what good euent succeeded vpon so long a iourney? marie thys forsooth, that Assur could not cure theyr wounde, nor release them from the chaines of seruitude. Saul brought the weighty censure of almighty God, vppon his owne necke with greater speede, by conferring & (b) consulting with the Sorceresse (c) Ochozias, by demanding counsell touching hys disease, of Belzebub the God of Accaron: yeelded vp both the life of thys world and hope of the world to come, as a fine for most detestable ingratitude. The tender childe of (d) Ieroboam, was cleane swept away, by the blast of vntimely death: for the golden calues which hys wicked father had erected, as it were in despight of God himselfe in Dan and Bethel. In like sort (e) Manes that vile Hereticke, had no sooner vndertooke the cure of the kinges sonne of Persia, but it deceased in that very moment. The texte aboundeth wyth examples of the Sorcerers in Egypt, which were able to bring Frogges and Grasshoppers vppon the lande, with diuers other plagues: as Pandora with her boxe of malladies, enfecte al the world: but neyther coulde she nor they, release and ridde the countrey from the same, without helpe of a godlye Moyse. Much after the same manner, the prophets of thys time, will giue a likely gesse or aime at the falling out of mischiefes, plotted by them selues, our witches also wyll not sticke to pynch and pyne theyr neyghbours cattell, kyll theyr pulayne, turne theyr Ale, and holde theyr credite with the simple people by shrewd turnes: supposing it to be sufficient for the maintenance therof, yf eyther they can mooue the world to feare or to admire, but there is not one among them to be founde that worketh any good, no not one, theyr throate is an open sepulchre, and theyr steppes leade to hell: and as the Prophet speaketh: Sapientes sunt ad mala, bona autem faceri nescierunt.

I coulde enlarge my speeche vpon this poynt, in proouing howe precisely the Prophets imitate the tyrant Naas, in demaunding our (f) right eyes for tribute: that is, the light of our religious vnderstandinge: but I passe it ouer. The Deuill theyr greate Oracle, neuer taketh any payne or trauaile, sayth good olde father Gerson, without certeyne hope and promise of rewarde: let hym haue hys ordinary fee, which is assured

*Italy*

(a)

Osee. 5. 13,

(b)

1. Par. 10. 30,

(c)

4. Reg. 1. 5,

(d)

3. Reg. 14. 9,

(e)

Soer. lib. 3,

cap. 5,

(f)

1. Reg. 11. 2,

(g)

Euseb. hist.

lib. 6, cap. 35



## *A defensatue against the poyson*

confidence in wicked artes, and he will promise all the worlde, as he did to Christ, though that promise euer propueth void, and desolueth into nothing? The sleight and practise of this gamester, is to hoist vs vp with pretence of fauoure and fyre promises: that afterwarde hee may be sure to trice vs with a greater hazarde, as I meane to prooue when I come to publish and recount the manifolde mishappes, of sundry persons of great calling: which forooke the pleasing springs of ordinary knowledge, for the pittes and leaking cesters of the Deuils sophistrie. It is inough for vs to learne by thys, that nothing is more opposite to constant looue, the mistrust and ielousie: nothing more offensive in the sight of God, then confidence reposed in an arme of flesh: nothing that more inciteth foolish men to quest vp on the glimse of future light (which no carnall eyes, can possibly discern) then casting of vnfaithfull and mistrustfull doubts: least eyther our almighty God and loouing father, be lodged as the (g) Prophet saide of Baal, in diuersorio, in his Inn, so as he can not heare, or so forgetfull of his seruantes, as he will not helpe, or so void of ordinarie meanes, as it lyes not in him to releue vs in necessity. Neyther let it moue vs, that God graunteth not vpon the suddaine, what soeuer importunitie can aske: for sometimes he reiecteth our request for our own behoofe, as he dealt with (h) Paule, and graunteth to the wicked at an other time their owne desires to theyr vtter ouerthrow, as appeareth in the (i) scriptures: and heerevpon, S. Augustine gathereth a comfortable and a certaine rule, that whensoever we craue any thing of God, with zealous prayer, and sincere repentaunce for our sinnes, which is both fitte for vs to receiue, and for him to gyue, *Aut dabit quod petimus, aut quod nouit esse utilius*: eyther he wil graunt the same which we require, or what hee knowes by prouidence, to bee more profitable: our vnderstanding in the matters of the world is limited, and may erre in choise, the wisdom of God is infinit, and therefore can neuer swertue by direction. To conclude, as it is certaine that God will neyther cast of those, that depende vpon his care, nor protect or warrant any in that diggeth vnder grounde for pipes and conluite of intellige: so nothing is more euident then that distrust eyther in the will or in the worke of God, is that Gadbee which hath vrged and prouoked many wanton wittes, to seeke for other naked helpes, which alwayes shrinke before a storme, and giue them ouer in theyr most necessitie.

Furthermore, the pliant readinesse of brainicke fooles, to cherish idle dreames and fancies, euen as babes of their owne begetting, to ascribe diuinitie to vaine conceites, to flatter themselues with a fruitlesse hope of things that neither dyd, nor can euer come to passe, and to beleue that what-soeuer certaine mountebankes pretend is trueth, and that there is small difference, betweene the shewe of seeming Prophets and the substance of true prophesie, last of all credulitie, to speake  
plaine

(h)  
3. Re. 18, 27

(i)  
2. Cor. 12.9

(k)  
1. Reg. 8, 9,

De doct.  
Christ.

plaine English, the Nource of error hath beene another certaine cause, why so many simple men, declining rather after shaddowes of apparance then discoueries of prooffe: haue beene so grossely blinded, with the vanities and mascarados of abuse, as neither they coulde flie the chafe which leadeth to decaye, nor shunne that Lions denne, wherein so many steppes of entrie, but nor one of safe returne, may be discouered. Non enim cum falluntur isti, &c. For our maner is not, saith Chrysostome, to reprove those Prophets when they swerue, which is their common guile: but to admire them, when they iunpe vpon a point of trueth, though beside all rules and groundes of certaintie: which chaunceth verie seldome. We neede not rife in the Monuments of former times, so long as the present age wherein we liue, may furnish vs with store of most straunge examples. For though we haue beene yeerely mated, and abused with blinde Almanackes, in such a sort, as whosoever buies the same, as directories eyther of the weather or of the world: may be truely sayd, to be made a foole, for good lucke sake vpon the first of Ianuarie, though the Prophets and wise men, as diuerse call them by a figure in this age, deliuer not fine golde for brasie, as Glaucus did to Diomedes in exchange, but smoke for siluer, though the vessels of our ordinarie trafficke in this kinde, bring home neither Golde nor siluer, like the fleete of Salomon that traualled to Ophir, but pyld apes and Peacocks: yet are we prone and eager still, to put forth the stocke of all our wittes and faculties, in hope of chippes, with no lesse pining thirst of nouelties, then if the world of vanities were newly to beginne, and the race of follie coulde neuer haue an ende. The wiser sort of men, hath euer made their chiefe account, τὴν δὲ δεύτεραν προνοήσαντες of the second witte which comes by purchase: but nothing warneth vs against the thirde and fourth abuse, which retchlesse manner growes vpon simplicitie. The vulgar sort at Athens, were so foolish as to thinke, that Minos was inspired in a certaine hollowe caue or vault by Iupiter, with euill lawes: which forthwith vpon his continuing out, while dame follie was in her chiefe pride, he made to be enacted and approoued by consent of the people. The Romiines helde the like conceite, of Numa Pompilius their King: as if he neither had inuented or perswaded any lawe, without aduise of the Nimphe Egeria, with whom for a better colour of the guile, he pretended priuate conference. This grosse credulitie, the mortall and professed enemye to constant faith, bewitched diuerse learned men so farre, uid Plato with the rest: as they beleued certainlye, that Socrates the Paynim, was directed as seconde Isaac, by an Angell from aboue: where as in verie deede, eyther there was no such thing, or if there were, it was the light of nature, which teacheth vs, saith Origen, the waye to vertue, without any prompter of experience. With these, wee may compare the swarmes of

In 2. epist.  
ad Tim.  
hom. 4,

3. Reg. 10.  
22.

In 4. Iud.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

Cicero de  
diuin. lib. 2

Histor. li. 3.

Philip. 1. 10.  
1. Thes. 5. 21  
1. Ioh. 4. 1.

simple and seduced soules, who thought that where Dagon was, the  
felde could not be lost: that Bel deuoured all the Kings allowance, for  
his deintie fare: that God spake by blockes and carued stones: that  
Christ, who came to saue the world by bloud, shoulde tyrannise with  
externall pompe and shining Maieftie: that Mahomet the glosing sico-  
phant, was inspired with a Doue: that Munzer was incited and prouo-  
ked by a blessed spirit, to raise the bowers of Germanie: and a multi-  
tude of others, whose blockish ignoraunce, deserueth not so much as  
the flourish of a penne: much lesse the recorde of antiquitie. Both all  
and euerie one of these, was ledde to credite not a trueth in deede, but  
a common errour, soothed and augmented, by the voyce and warrant  
of such wilie persons, as made profite of their imbecillitie, in which re-  
spect, it is confessed by themselues, that oracles and idoles neuer waxed  
dome, till men became incredulous: as if our lightnesse in beleefe,  
had bene their tongue, and our oversight, their credite. It may seeme  
straunge to those, which spie light at a narrow loope, that any man  
could be thus grosse, as to delight in shaddowes: but whether such dis-  
orders sprang, as Tacitus supposeth, at the first, In adulationem præsen-  
tis potentia, or by simplicitie and ignoraunce in very deede: the mat-  
ter is all one; for that they mounted by degrees to this exceeding  
height, and brought themselues into conceite, by long continuance.  
For as the giddie people, waxing wanton by long raunging in the leas  
of pride and libertie, had neede bee curbed at the straightest lincke of  
awe: so doubtlesse, their facilitie to wonder at vaine toyes, which car-  
rie straunge apparance to the world, was such at the first: as no glosing  
Prophet could say more, then they would sweare, and for Magnus gra-  
tias, as Terence sayes, they made vp Ingentis. Whereupon, as rumors,  
by the winde of sundry mouthes, are mounted farre aboue the pitch of  
a common reache, and the strength of fame, encreaseth by the length  
of tranaile: so by their impulsiu meanes, the greater sort, which euer  
wanteth skill to discern and iudge, were moued to admire the spirites  
of vaine men, before they prooued, as they ought, an ex Deo essent,  
whether they were of God or otherwise. The first conceite, is like a  
clodde of sande, which gathering more store of matter, by diuersitie  
of tydes and tract of time: becomes a shelve, and at the length a barre,  
to wracke vessels of the greatest burden, and touching men, which bend  
and apply theyr eares to the blast of euerye whisking winde [as Cesar  
hath obserued in his history:] cyther we may note them, for the grea-  
ter parte, to be fickle in theyr choise of freendes, or discontented wyth  
the present state, or desirous to be dealing with great matters, or ouer-  
shotte and almost druncke, with the course of long calamitie: so that  
whatsoeuer in the calme of peace is but reputed, tanquam fortuna siue  
casus, as fortune or chaunce, in the storme of trouble is esteemed, as the  
wrath

wrath of God : and agayne sayth Tacitus , *vti mos est vulgi fortuita ad culpam trahunt*, as the manner of the common people is, they impute things that are casuall to default or negligence, & why so? forsooth because with Zebal in the booke of Iudges, *vmbras hominum, quasi capita montium vident, et hoc errore decipiuntur* : they take mens shaddowes for the toppes of mountaines, and are beguiled with thys error. Could Egypt euer haue made his prophets so simple and so sencelesse, as to thinke, that onely by staring on the starres, which haue all one figure : they were able to diuine of chaunces, that betide vs in our liues and dealinges? would Greece haue suspended theyr whole confidence, vpon the sayth of Oracles, Persia vpon beleefe in dreames, Germanie of witches, India of Deuils, & so forth euery prouince, vpon one vayne rest or other? so that wee might vpraye them as the prophet dyd the Iewes. According to the number of thy citties, are thy Gods O Iuda: and accordinge to the number of thy wayes O Ierusalem, hast thou erected and built altars of confusion, whereon sacrifice is offered to Bahl &c. If that one sparke of originall infirmitie, which remaineth as an heire loorne by descent, among the sonnes of Adam, had not tainted and infected our whole kynde, wyth the dregges of error. Fayth is a vertue, no man wil deny, but not rash beleefe, it must be suted and confirmed, to the course of duety and obedieñce to God : not irregulare, perceiueable, not imaginatiue, built vpon the stedfast rocke, which neythier wyndes nor waues can moue, not hanging in the ayre, fixed vpon certaine principles, not volant at aduenture. How then coulde the departure of godly Moyses from hys charge, for no longer tyme then while he myght conferre wyth God, about hys holy lawes, vpon the mountaine excuse the wilfull and vnkynde ingratitude of Israell, in setting vp a golden Calfe, as if both their old God and their olde guide, had forsaken the. Put the case, it serued Ierobams turne for his owne periculate, in respect of wicked and vaine pollicies, to set vp his golden calves in Dan and Bethel : least the people by repairing yeerely to Ierusalem, as to the place whereunto Gods true seruice was annexed, by the charter of his holy worde, might in time be moued or perswaded, to retyre backe to the regiment of Iuda: was this a reason, why the feelie subiectes, should at any time agnise them for their lawfull Goddes, or ascribe their safe deliuerance out of the hands of Egypt, to their mercie? Must the brazen Serpent suddainely bee made a god, because it was ordained in the wildernesse to (a) cure diuerse greivous maladies, in the (b) figure of his sacred bloud, who cleansed all the fylthie spottes and steines, of our originall iniquitie? Or is not this a way, to deprave and quite peruert the nature of a signe, when wee seeke to vse, or rather to abuse the same as an instrument of obiection, of aduancing

Tacit. Annal. lib. 3 & 4.

Iud. 9. 36.

Iere. 11. 13.

Exod. 32.

3. Reg. 12. 30.

(a) Num. 21. 9.

(b) Ioh. 3. 14.



*A defensative against the poyson*

ring our conceites, to the wycked worship of an Idole? These breake  
 necke downe falles of the godly, can not choose but seeme passing  
 greuous, as the Preacher sayth: homini habenti sensum, to a man  
 that hath vnderstanding: but yet it pleaseth God, to suffer diuers scan-  
 dales in the Church, by reason of our ouer great facilitie to flyde, and  
 those eyther to make prooffe of all, that as S. Paule wrytes, they that  
 are (c) tryed, may be manifest: or to punish former sinnes in (d) some,  
 or to raise a meane of (e) working grace in others. Symon Magu-  
 had no sooner made a proffer, of hys skill in (f) witchery, which abu-  
 sed simple eves: but some affirmed hym, to be the power of God,  
 that is called greates, and yet it pleased God within a whyle, to match  
 and ouer match hym, in such a sorte as for verie shame of hys owne  
 default, and admiration of the ministers of God, he would haue (g)  
 purchased a place among them: if eyther grace coulde haue bene  
 bought with golde, or the scope of godly myracles had bene increase  
 of treasure. In like sort, after Paule and Barnabas had restored a lame  
 cripple, to the perfect vse of his limmes: some would haue sacrificed  
 in their honor, by the stile of (h) Iupiter and Mercurie, as though the  
 name of Iesus, whereunto the knees of all thynges (i) bowe, both in  
 heauen and earth, and vnderneath the same, were of no force: vnlesse,  
 Diu similes hominibus, Gods like to men, had descended in a liuely  
 shape to visite them. The fond (k) Iuders at Mitilen, which presu-  
 med vnadvisedly, that the viper which crept vpo the hand of S. Paule,  
 as he warmed hym among the rest, after hys escape from shipwracke,  
 was sent downe for a punishment of murder, or some other heynous  
 crime: would needes haue dubbed hym a God vppon the suddayne,  
 wyth as slender reason, when they saw no festering nor swelling in the  
 place affected, leapyng, as the prouerbe speaketh, out of a quakinge  
 colde into a scalding fyre, that is, out of the lesse, into a greater and  
 more desperate extremitie. One day, the Iewes would make Christe  
 thei King: an other day, they layde wayte to tripe him in his speeches,  
 at one time, they cut downe braunches from the trees, and spread their  
 garments in hys waye: at an other, they bade crucifye. There was ney-  
 ther moderation in theyr fauours, nor temper in theyr mallice, no  
 touch of truth, no weyght of wysedome, nor regarde of reason. And  
 albeit, ytyching mutabilitie brought forth no worse effects, then error  
 in one poynt or twof (as doubtlesse it is lyke a comon fluse, to let in all  
 the poyson, of deceite: ) yet wyseme, will esteeme it as a token of great  
 imbecillitie in those, which seeke to garde theyr fortune by their witt,  
 to lye naked and open to abuse, and neuer to be longer free, from the  
 practise of entysing baytes: then till new trappes and treasons, may be  
 couched vnder leaues of Laurell, to deceiue the credulous. Vppon this  
 ground, dependes the generall misdeeming, and mistaking of the pro-  
 per

per causes of all straunge effectes, as when the Paynims in the first beginning of the Church, ascribed all mis-fortunes, to the publicke preaching and receiuing of the fayth of Christ: whereas, if any consequent might be deriued from this ground, the plagues were greate, because mens eares were not more open, to the voyce of their redeemer. I neede not vouch examples in this matter, because nothing is more rise and common, in the practise of our life: then for men that eyther want experience or grace, to make such a mixture, in straunge accidentes that happen without any rule, as hath not *Rationem causæ ad effectum*, that is affinitie, regard or reference: which euery cause may claime and challenge, to his proper and peculiar effect by reason. Such bad Philosophers, may be compared to younge boyes, who sincking vnder water, when they first begynne to swimme: take holde of whatsoeuer cometh first to hand, though it be but a bul-rush, or to the new founde Alchimistes of our owne time, which take vpon them, to make quidlibet ex quolibet, weaving and vnweaving dayly the luckelesse webbe of Penelope: without eyther reason for their mysterie, or rewarde for their labour. Cicero declareth a great desire, to vnderstande the rüities of coniecturall deceite, with a newe founde principle, that the worlde was framed in such order at the first beginning: *Vt certis rebus signa quadã præcurrerent*, y certain signes or tokens, should alwaies run before certain things, to giue a glimpse or light of their approaching. But though we should admit this rule in certaine things: yet can it not be stretched vnto al, nor to the principal before the base, or if it might extend to all: it could auail vs little, so long as our senses are too dull to discry this secret light, which lurketh in the breast of nature. The publication of such vaine & friuelous conceits, as these: is a better meane to foster ignorance, then to weane the wilde and wanton heads of this vnrule age, frõ the milke of vanitie. For what reason can any man aliue, eyther learned or vnlearned bring: why the Satirisk which appeared to the mother of Dionisius the Tyrant, whẽ she bare him in hir wõb, should rather make impression in the nature of the childe, of a pregnant witte, as the Prophets saide: then of a sauage and vnquenchable desire of bloud, which was afterward approoued by the sequell? Why should the swarme of Wasps, which light by fortune on the side of Diones shipp: declare that all his dealings shoulde not be durable, but bright and splendent for the time: rather then waspish and offensive, according to the nature of that sharpe significant? Why should the byrth of a girle with two heades, rather import mutinie and rebellion in the commõ wealthe: then breach of wedlocke in priuate families, since first the childe was borne, not in the Guilde hall, but in a priuate house: and then not euerie man In genere, nor yet the sexe of manne is a womans head, but her owne proper husband: as Saint Paule prooueth to the Corinthians? What kinred or affinitie, coulde the Prophetes vouch betweene the

Tertul.in  
Apologie.

1. Cor. 11, 3,  
Eph. 5, 23



## A defensarie against the poyson

ni. lms T  
argobqA

towne of Veios, and the River: why the first could not be surpris'd, by the force of speare and shielde, till the latter, which ranne nothing neere vnto the walles, were diuerted by the force of men from the woonted Channell. The vulgar sort, are wont to lue in feare of ciuill warre, vpon the sight of bloodie streames in the aire, and againe, they looke for store of graine, and plentie of all things; when the waters beare a taint, or colour, not vnlike to milke: and yea good Philosophers can put them out of doubt, that the first proceedeth of a scalding vapour, drawen vp by the Sunne; the second by infusion of the lande water. Algaie, if thunderboltes were alwaies messengers of bad successe: so manie should not fall into the seas, in the desert and waste groundes, nor vpon the toppes of hilles, where no man dwelles, against whom, fortune may spend the mallice of her raging shotte: and yet the Romaines were so superstitious, euen at the greatest height of their authoritie, as sometimes they were content to disferre, at another time to breake off absolutely, their matters of great weight and moment; as forsoken by like fearefull accidentes: so that although the boulttes and flashes did small hurt abrode, yet the Fathers were made fooles at home, which endangered the pollidie. But Philosophers can shewe faire Cardes, to proue that while there is a sonney in Oceane; and earth: these things both haue doone, will and must fall out, according to the season. Thunder neuer signifies any greater hurt, then it bringeth with it selfe, which is commonly noise and foule weather: beside, it worketh not vpon the bodie politick of any common wealth, but vpon the seas, the toppes of hilles, the Cattell and the Cities. There may bee secreete influence of Planets I confesse, rather into one kinde of subiect than another: as the Moone is founde by plaine experience, to beare her greatest stroke vpon the seas; likewise in all things that are moiste, and by consequent in the braines of man. There may bee another kinde of secreete league, or harmonie by mutuall agreement betwene one bodye and another: as two Lutes tuned in one keye, will sounde together. Wee finde sometime, a kinde of discorde or consent by kinde: as when some trees will eyther pyne or prosper, by the spreading braunches of some others, that growe next; likewise when the corpses dooth bleed in presence of the murderer, &c. Diuinitie of these vstered properties, att foule, to further or impeach the growth or coming forward of such things as are: but not to figure or foretel the course of any future accident, which cannot be sayde by vs ytt to be at all, in respect of the great distance, that is betweene the signe and the substance, till it happen. But such are the straining humours of our Prophets, as vlesse they forge a new Philosophie, with principles of rare diuinitie, but by observing orderly, as our fathers did, but by supposing and presuming yndiscreetly, as no wise men are wont to doo: in they can neuer crape the profite which could be the Prophets vouch betwene the

2. 11. 20 C  
Eph. 2. 23

towne

D

which they seeke by guile, not maintaine the credite which they claime by prouidence. Galen complaineth bitterly in sundry places of his workes, of certaine peeuish mourebanks at Rome, who repynning at his knowledge in the proper causes of all things, belonging to his faculty, whereby strange curtes were dayly wrought (because it lay not in theyr skil to match the same) gaue out by meane of whisperers in diuers places of the citie, that he gessed not by ordinary meanes at mens diseases, or the time & manner of their death &c. But that he was a soothsayer, a prophet, and I know not what: not much vnlike in mallice to the stubborne Jewes, who could not endure, that Christ should be sayd to cast out Demons in any other name, then that of Belzebub. For though to cure diseases, and to to driue out spirites, be a very laudable and godly worke: yet not to doe the same, by wicked and vngodly meanes, which made both Galen for his credite, and our Sauour Christ for our instruction, to put in theyr answer. Much after the same sorte, one Arantius a Romaine, was sayde to speake vpon his death bedde. More vnto, after the manner of the prophets: though in very deede, he took his leuell by none other marke, then the common ground of reason. The Women of Coniath, [as Chrysostome writes] had a very straunge kinde of custome or vsc among them, which was, to sette vppon lightes or tapers, at the birth of euery childe with proper names: and loke what name that taper bare which lasted longest in the burning, the same would they transfeere, in token of good lucke, to the tender infant: as though there were affinity betwene these members of comparison, or the reason were indifferent, that because the waxe was older and more durable in the light: therefore the qualities of health and strength, ought to be more proper to the bodye. And herevpon it comes to passe, as S. Ierom writes, that the world is best affected to those toyes, wherewith Christ is most offended. We may learne by that, which is recorded in Valerius Maximus, a strong Proctor of the Pagane vanities: what a dee there was in Rome, when the Marble Idoles waxed moyst, although it be most proper to theyr kynde, to sweate before the raynes, but if the Capitole by chance were blasted with a flash of lightening (as it striketh often at the toppes of steeples, & of necessity must haue a place whereon to light:) the generall discouragement was no whitte lesse, then if the forte had beene surprised, and both the temple and the common welch, defaced by the Destinies. When the garyson which lay in Palestine, had once resolved by a generall assent among themselves, to proclaime Vespasian as Emperour: nothing could betide so farre, beside the leuell of the marke, sayth Tacitus, but the same was wrested, and enforced by the sleight and craft of one crafty witte or other, as an argument of good successe, in that cause or enterprise, which they sought to further & aduance

Mat. 9, 34.

Taci. Annal lib. 6.

In 1. Cor. 4. homil. 14.

Isa. 40.

(d) Hier. ad Paul.

Valer. Max.

(c) Tacit.

Suet. in Vesp.



## *A defensatiue against the poysen*

Plut. in Bru.

Math. Parris

(a)  
Nicol. Gil.  
in Annal.

(b)  
Iust. Mart.  
in dial cum  
Tryph.  
Tertul. in  
Apoliget.

(c)  
Socr. hist. lib  
6. cap. 13,

with theyr vttermost endeuor: in so much, as Sostrates the Priest vnderooke, to defery Vespasians aduancement, in the bowells of the sacrifice. Some gathered that Brutus should be flaine, by the discomfiture of a certaine Eagle, which came from that side wherein the campe of Brutus lay: but in very trueth it pleased God, eyther by thys meane to wreake the death of Cesar (with whose blood thys Brutus had embrued hys handes) or to transfourme the commō wealth of Rome, into the state of Monarchie, the last of those which are recorded in the prophcie of Daniel, against the comming of his onely sonne accordinge to the flesh: who is that king of kinges, and Lord of Lords, which was prefigured before the lawe, and resounded by the Prophets. The masse of Requiem, which Thomas Archebishoppe of Caunterbury, celebrated the selfe same day that he was reconciled to the king his Soueraigne: was thought by diuers learned men, as diuers of our English writers shewe, to prognosticate greate hazarde to the Bishoppe: and why not rest and quiet harbour, after his long tossing in the surges of vncertaine chaunces, which the worde of Requiem importeth, or at leaste the death, rather of an other then himselfe, because no prieste singeth the masse for himselfe, but for annother. Furthermore we read that because certaine droppes of the consecrated Wine, fell downe by mischaunce vpon the floure or pauement of the Church at Rheines, when Pope Eugenie sang masse: many were (a) afraide, that greate mishappes would come after, as indeede there did, but not in that respect: for the scalding vapoures of mens wreckfull mindes, would haue founde a vent, though the Pope had bene more heedefull and respectiue in the administration. I tolde before, howe vnaduisedly the Christians, were (b) charged by the Painims, with all plagues and myseries that fell vpon the common wealth: though the Deuill can not lincke these causes and effects together. Epiphanius (c) prognosticated that Chrysostome should departe thys life, in great disgrace wyth hys Prince, and which is more, depriued of his bishoppricke: Chrysostome, to requite his peremptorie and vncharitable iudgement, assured him likewise, that he should neuer retorne safe to his see: and both tooke effect, as the fathers, though perhappes in heate, had vttered. It may be, that both grounded theyr coniectures, vpon the wrekeful mallice of Eudoxia, (which at that instant bare all the stroke) againste the godly pastors of the Church, or some further reason then the stories vtter, might induce them thus to iudge: but I am sure, that neyther of them both was esteemed or admired as a Prophet.

Sstratonicus an experte Phisition, deemed of the goodnes of the water, by the complexions and health of those that dayly drancke therof. Electus, captaine of the garde to Commodus the Emperour, suspecting that the wanton surfeites and dysorders of his Maister, would at

one

## *of supposed prophecies.*

one time or other put his life in hazarde : gaue him warninge to beware of an Apoplexie. Gregorie Nazianzene obseruing narrowlye the roling eyes, the cruell looke, the giddie head, the fonde demaundes, the childish aunswers, the wrekefull minde, and disdainefull maner of that hell-hound Iulian, at such time as he gaue himselfe at Athens, to the studie of vnlawfull artes, had reason to crye out with grones, O quantum monstrum Romanum alit imperium? O what a monster doth the Romaine Empire nourish? meaning, that if euer he attained to that height, (which was expected by the slaues & ministers of hope,) it was almoste vnpossible that hee should prooue other then a seconde Hazaell, to persecute and afflict the godly. Isidorus the Byshoppe of Hispala in Spaine, vpon the sight of Mahomet, but a great deale more vpon consideration of the qualities, and circumstaunces both of the person, tyme and people, with whom and where he liued: gaue a like-lye gesse at the Tragedies, whereof he prooued author and actor afterwarde, by the practise of Sergius that horrible Apostota. Theodora the Empresse of Constantinople, vpon the sight of one Basilus, who was Lorde great maister to her Sonne: as one affrighted gaue a shrike, and after tolde the Emperour, that certainly thys Basile woulde prooue a Basiliske, that is, a Cockatrice, as it fell out afterwarde. Some thought that Theodosius, the patriarch, diuined by an inward inspiration, vpon the first sight of Andronicus, that he should weare a crowne: but some of the wryters show, that his light proceeded rather from the warnings of Manuel, the late deceased Emperour. All these were holden for grease prophets, and I wyll not denye, but the better sorte, might be inspyred from aboue: but both best and worst, were altogether voyde of any light, or knowledge de futuris contingentibus, according to those rules or kyndes of ayme, which are prescribed by the curious.

At the byrth of Henry, first infant after Cardinall, and lately kyng of Portingale, vpon the death of his Nephewe, all the city of Vlis-bona, as the (d) stories testifie, was couered with snowe: whereupon some gathered, the rare integrity and honour of hys lyfe, which in verye deede was true, although the coulour were not forcible: for I woulde rather gesse antiquity vpon this ground, because we reade in Daniel, that God appeared vnto him, hauing heare vpon his heade, (e) Tanquam lanam mundam, like pure wooll, and Christe appearing in lyke manner vnto Iohn, had heyre as white as (f) snowe, or if coniectures haue no force: there can be no losse in referring the quality of the weather, to the tyme and season of the yeere, wherein it happened. It fareth in thys poynt with prophets, as it doth with other simple men, who fixing their eyes vpon flitting and remoouing cloudes, which passe ouer with the racke: sometimes imagine them to bee greate mountaines, sometime dragons, some time castles, sometime beares, accordinge to

*Nicephorus  
prob pndor q  
Cui .5*

(d)  
Ofor. de reb  
Emmanuel.  
lib. 8.

(e)  
Dan. 7, 9.

(f)  
Apoc. 1, 14.



## *A defensatiue against the poysen*

Tacitus. An.  
lib. 3,

Ioseph. An.  
lib. 2,

Act. 5, 34,  
Gen. 3,

Ioseph. Anti.  
lib. 5, cap. 2,

Math. 11, 13,

the sundry figures of theyr fancie . Wherevpon me thinkes there is greate reason to commend the wisdom of Suetonius Paulinus, who rather bound himselfe to warie courtes vpon good aduise: then to the brunt of hazarde in a fielde of Fortune. Nunquam enim temeritas &c. for temeritie is neuer coupled with true wisdom, nor chaunce called into touncell touching matters of great moment. The Romaines held it for an exceeding frowarde and vnluckie signe, that the standard could not be lifted from the grounde, when they were at the poynt of ioyning battail with theyr ennemye: and yet perhappes the fault was in the standard bearer, who was eyther feeble for defaulte of health, or faint-hearted for want of courage, or willing to deferre the fighte tyll some fitter opportunity. The starres of Golde, which glided and fell downe from the rooffe of Appollos temple at Delphos, could be found no more: whereuppon the Priestes beganne to quake and shiuer, let it then bee their foolish feare, no reason in the signe, since the greatest inconuenience I finde: was the losse of so much Gold, embezeled by some cunning theefe, or perhappes by the priestes themselues, as the weight of the starres in gold amounted too: and in this maner Nabuchodonozor was deceiued of the deinty fare, which was provided for his blocke almighty. Perhaps wee may be put in minde of a Scribe that gaue warning vnto Pharaio, concerning a certaine Israelite, that should arise and conquer Egypt: A greate matter doubtlesse > when they that had but halfe an eye coulde iudge, that as trueth is strong and preuaileth, so the children of Israell, standing in defence of trueth: were very like to put down their enemies, according to that graue & weighty sentence of Gamaliel in the publicke consistorye: if it be of God, it cannot be resisted. Beside it may be, that thys Scribe hauing heard, that the seede of a woman should bruse the serpents heade: spake rather of the regement of Christ, then of the transmigration of Moyse, for as the first departed with a spoyle of Egypt, but subdued it not: so Christ, not onely robbed them of outwarde pompe, but brake theyr scepter, and ouerthrewe theyr Idoles. An other Prophet signified, that the citie of Ierusalem should lye waste and desolate, at what time the temple were defiled with vncircumcised people: and no meruaile, since a very childe coulde tell, that the temple was the strength, the wealth and onely countenance, of al the Iewish state: and therefore who would think, that so long as eyther man or woman were a liue within the towne, they woulde not fighte vntill the laste droppe of theyr bloode, in defence bothe of theyr religion, and of theyr cuntrye. Beside, the Prophets made thys matter euident a long time before, denouncing to the sonnes of Abraham, according to the flesh, in respect of theyr unthankfulnesse: a finall ende both of the priesthoode and the ciuil state together, *Omaes enim prophetae et lex, usque ad Iohannem propheta-*  
verunt

verint. The light, which Pope Clement gaue to Charles the competi-  
tor of Naples, and to the Duke of Austria, concerning many strange  
misfortunes, which afterwarde befel them in the bloody viage against  
kyng Charles: was narrowly obserued and esteemed by some writers,  
as a glimpse of prophetic: but such a prophet any man might be, that  
would haue peized and compared in the ballaunce of indifferent re-  
garde, theyr feeblenesse with his force, theyr hazard with hys certaintye,  
theyr hope with his possession, theyr vnscaioned heades, with his ripe  
experience. Henry the fift, [sayth maister Haule] prognosticated, that  
the young Earle of Richmonde, who was then his page, should one day  
stint the strife betweene Yorke and Lancaster: which secret coulde not  
haue beene reuealed, as some thinke, without a deeper insighte into fu-  
ture thinges; then common sence or reason can attaine or reach vnto.  
For mine owne part, as I may confesse without any preiudice vnto  
my cause, and finde some reasons to belecue, that to this godly Prince,  
which built his onely confidence, vpon the care and mercie of his God,  
without regard of fickle chaunce, it pleased God likewise, to distribute the  
grace of future vnderstanding in an ample measure: yet am I ledde to  
thinke withall, that any man of iudgement, in the dealings of the  
world, which eyther felt or sawe the plagues of that afflicted age, by  
reason of the maine turnes and chaunges on all sides, from disgrace to  
glory, from restraint to regiment, and as the wise man sayes, A carcere  
ad regnum: might easily conceyue, that cyther the redde Rose, which  
had beene sterued with vntimely frost, would once againe reuiue and  
spread the leaues in this young impe, who was the next heire of the line  
of Lancaster: or else the wisdom of the lande, would take such or-  
der, for the winding vp of this endlesse bottome of debate and strife,  
as Lancaster should haue no reason to complaine, whose tittle, as I sayd  
before, vppon the Kings decease depended wholie, vppon the young  
Earle of Richmond and his issue. In lyke manner it is written, that Pi-  
us Secundus, misliking somewhat of the slight account, which the king  
of Ciprus seemed to make of him, in passing by the place, where he was  
resident, without so much as a Dietr Garde declared vnto, certaine  
freendes of his, that the sayd King would be taught ere it were long, to  
make a longer stave with him, and vse more curtesie to those that gaue  
none other cause: which fell out afterward, according to the gesse in  
verie deede, although the Pope were rather drawn to this coniecture,  
by the wautes and great necessitie wherein he sawe the King, then by  
rules of indirect discouerie. Diuerse woonder at the gifte of Ananias,  
who foretolde, three yeeres before it came to passe, the ruines of Ieru-  
salem: as though this were so strange to those that vnderstand, what  
punishment belongeth vnto sinne; or haue read the Prophetes, or re-  
tayned fast in memorie: what Christ had thundered not long before,

Estenan de  
Garib. tom.

2.

or di

Pandulph  
coll ear in  
histo. Nea-  
polit.

Eccle. 4. 14.

Aen. Sylva  
in bel. Cyp.



## *A defensatiue against the payson*

Mat. 27, 25,

Ioseph. anti.  
lib. 20,

Euse. hist.  
lib. 2. cap. 20

Ioseph. lib. 6,  
cap. 3,  
Euseb. lib. 3,  
cap. 8.

or themselves deserued by that greuous imprecation. *Sanguis illius super nos, & filios nostros*, his bloud bee vpon vs and our issue : as it coulde not bee for seene, without dubbing Ananias for a Prophet, cheefely considering, that Iosephus himselfe, from whom they borrow this report (although he were a Iewe) was not affraide to attribute the plagues, which fell vpon that Cittie, to the great in-iustice that was vsed : first against Christ himselfe, and afterward against Saint Iames, his Couzin by the flesh, his Minister in duetie, & a splendent image of his vertue. Three straunge accidents fell out at one time in Siracuse, as we reade in Plutarche. First a Pigge was brought into the worlde without eares : a certaine token, sayd the Prophetes, that the people would neyther heare nor obey their Magistrates. Secondly, the salte water on a sodaine became fresh : which by the rule of interpretation pretendeth, chaunge in gouernment. Thyrdly, an Eagle chaunced to snatch a Partisane out of a Souldiers hand : & there vpon some gathered a likely comfort, that the tyranny, wherby the people were suppressed and trode vnder foote : should haue an ende &c. But as we see, that these thinges hang vpon coniecture, and are open to the generall conceite of all : so, for the warraunt of mine owne conceite, I can see no reason, to determine courses of a common wealth, which are swayed by counsell, by the figure of a beast that is voyd of reason : neither is there any rule or proportion in musicke, as I thinke, to tune one of these iarring notes by an other. By the seconde scruple, we haue rather cause to iudge, that great aboundaunce of land water, falling neere vnto the bayke, might alter some parte of the brinish tast : then gesse what fluxe of humors should infect the lande, which is most firme, by temper of the sea, which is most chaungeable. Vpon the thirde I would imagine, that as an Eagle is Iouis ales, the byrd of Iupiter, and therefore kinge of all the rest : so might it signifie, that a greater Prince then he that ruled Siracuse, should make an ende of warre, and depriue the state of the strongest weapon. Some thought, the breaking open of the gates of the Iewish temple of their owne accorde, which twenty men with all their strength, were not able to remooue, imported a free passage to theyr former liberties : but others rather feared, least the temple shoulde lye wast and open to the spoile of infidels, according to the prophecies of Christ : that one stone should not be left vpon an other. For nothing but a violent and raging storme, was able to repell or rend that vayle of ignoraunce, which mallice drew so full before their eyes : that they would neither see Christ in hys word, nor admire him for his innocencie, nor imbrase him for his miracles. Who can beleue, that euer any drawing Oxe spake in the voice of a man ? or if it did : why shoulde we not rather feare intrusion of sencelesse fooles, then inuasion by forraine ennemies ? When Dioa would not speake vnto the people, out of any other

*of supposed prophecies.*

other place then the highest tower in the cittie; wherevpon the common Diall stood, because it was the fittest for that purpose, both in respect of height and maiesty: many fell to sift and descant, what might be imported by the figure of thys altitude? Some thought, that because the pallace of the Tyrant Dionisius was vnder Dions feete, when he discoursed touching matters of the common wealth, it signified a treading downe of pryde and tyranny: others feared, least the setting of hys feete vpon the Dyall, which declares the stintlesse course and running of the Sunne, might shewe that his toyle should neuer haue an ende, nor his hope a satisfaction. The best coniecture had beene, that so the Sexton did his parte: neyther coulde the Diall further or impeache the plotte, which was then in working. Wherefore indeede coniectures and conceites fall out, as S. Augustine writes, sometimes according to the course which is prescribed and set downe by the Prophet: and yet for all that, Sorte non arte, by chaunce or lucke, rather then by cunning, so craftye wits are wont to wrest, to choppe and chaunge the chaunces of this life, like a slupmans hose, or a nose of waxe: accordinge to the compasse of theyr owne desire, and to perswade the world, vpon the whisking of a Sparrow, that God by prouidence will bring to passe, what soeuer man by folly can imagine. But he is euer one and chaungeth not, hys principles are grounded vpon truth, and the scepter of hys word is full of maiesty. If he commaunde vs, to directe our wayes according to the light and iudgement of hys lawe: we may not plundge our selues into the blacke deepes of deceit, if he thought good to found his church vpon a rocke of sure defence: let man beware of fandy plottes, which haue none other kynde of shoring, then the props of errour. For prooffe heereof, we can not vouch a playner witnesse then Cicero, whom very shame constrayneth to confesse: Ad opinionem imperitorum, fictas esse religiones, that religiō was forged, according to the fancy of those that were vnlearned, and againe, that Ius argurum, was grounded at the first vpon coniecture: and afterwarde reteined and augmented vpon pollicie. We read moreouer, of a certaine commō vse and custome among the false prophets and diuiners of that age to meete together: partim in commentandi causa, partim inter se colloquendi, partely to discourse, and partly to conferre among themselues: at which times, I doubt not, but they tuned euery string with such a cunning wrest, as none could trippe them in theyr tale: Cogitationes concinnantes, ad perdendos homines in sermone mendacij, siliū and framing their conceites, to beguile men in the word of leasing. Thucidides reporteth the Prophets of hys time: Cantasse varia et inter se dissentientia, quæ quisque vt affectus erat, ita accipiebat, to haue giuen out matters diuerse and repugnant in them selues, which euery man tooke vpon him, to vnderstand as he was affected: and Quintius that worthy Senator, finding

E. himselfe

Confess. lib  
6. cap. 6

De deuin.  
lib. 2.

Esa. 32. 7.  
Thcid. hist.  
lib. 3.



## *A defensatine against the poyson*

*Liu. lib. 3.*

*Cor. Tacit.  
hist. lib. 4.*

*Anna. lib. 3.*

*Ad Atticū  
lib. 7.*

*Phillip. 4.*

himselfe pressed beyond measure, was glad to counterpleade the practise of the Tribunes, which was grounded vpon fancies of like moment with this flatte exception: that in olde time men were wont, to conforme and frame theyr dueties and obedience vnto those lawes and othes, which were enacted and ordeyned by the wisdome of theyr fathers: whereas now the maner was, to descant vpon plainest notes, and to construe and interpret othes, abodes and orders, at theyr owne pleasure. Cerealis as we read in Tacitus, was wont to impute al ouerthwarts which either chaunced by the negligence of leaders, or sloth in those that should be ledde: to destenie, as both the Turke and others deale euē at this day, supposing, that the campe would sooner bend to prouidence, which can not swerue, then to rules of warlike discipline, which may be mistaken. It was no rare or deinty practise with Tiberius, to wrest the smallest oportunitie, that chaunce could proffer: to the course of priuate benefite, and furthermore, our owne experience doth teach, that mindes, which haue been once affrighted with a suddaine feare: runne headlong without all regarde, into the labarinth of childish superstition. Were not Sibillas oracles abused in the vilest manner, howsoeuer some esteemed of them, as registers of the common wealth, and calenders of destiny? For first they must be locked vppe vnder dubble locke and key, then, onely those Duumucri sacrorum, which were authorised by the Senate in that office: might presume to scanne, to construe and apply theyr meaning, to the drift of pollicie. A gaine, whatsoever seemed to condemne the plottes which were in hande, was neuer brought to light, and which is worst of all, the coppies, which for feare of wracks by fier, or inuasiō, were cōmitted to the custody of diuers mē differed so much among themselues: as what one warranted, another ouerthrewe, so that it was not possible for both, eyther to bee false or true together. Beside, howsoeuer greeuous or offensiuē the transgression were, (in respect whereof the prophets aymed at reuenge to come:) the fine was euer at one rate, as namely, mending of bridges or high wayes, repaying of the temples, conduites, with such publicke offices, as were not wicked in themselues: nor yet more requisite in stormye weather then in fayre, when we know mooste, then when we can knowe nothing. But to proceede, what might Tullie meane by promising before hand, to compounde and bargaine for a fee, with those that had the charge of Sibillas oracles: *Vt quiduis potius, quam regem proferrent,* that they would bring reporte of what they liste, so that it were not of a king, (whose very name and sound the Romaines did detest) vnlesse it rested in the will of those, that had those oracles in charge: to saye and vsaye, to plant and supplant, to batter and defende, to gloze or to expounde and interpret, according to theyr owne humoure: as yf that enterprise of Cæsar, had onely wanted a slye Priest, to recommende the  
same

*of supposed prophecies.*

same (vnder the maske of pretended holinesse) to the peoples lykyng. Demosthenes complained very bitterly in like manner, more the three hundred yeeres before, τὸν πύθιον φιλιππίδην that Appollo was become kyng Phillips freende, as if the priestes and truchmen had beene eyther so discouraged with feare, or so dazeled with a golden Sun: as they and theyrs neither durst nor wold deliuer any thing, that might tende to the kynges preiudice. Wil any man belecue, that euer Plutarch would haue confessed without certaine groundes: In Apollinis oraculis aliquid sinceri non fuisse, that some thinges were not direct and sincere in Apollos oracles? or that Cicero, would haue acknowledged, the greatest part of them, to haue beene eyther ficta, vel effucita temere, fayned or powdered out without discretion: if the sleightes and stratagemes, had not been so cleere and euident aboute that tyme, as they that were most simple, might not onely glaunce at them by gesse: but grope them wyth theyr fingers. The Delphines had a flye prouiso, that none but a pure VyrGINE, myght deliuer what the Deuill aunswered: and onely for thys cause, that whensoever theyr pretended God, were taken with a pregnat lye: the same might eyther be forced out with cunning shifts, or if they would not serue, yet at the least, exception might be taken to the Vyrgines puritie: as if it were determined, that all maydes shoulde speede the worse, for scornefull Daphnies sake, or, as if the Gods must gloze and lye so often as theyr ministers are dissolute. But wee may note a little further also, that so often as the Priestes were well prouided of an aunswer, the Vault was deintily perfumed with a plesaunt baulme, and the Lutes and Harpes began to sounde: but otherwyse, neyther might the Gods delight their sent with odours, nor the pilgrimes please their eares with musicke. The Persians found out a safer way, which was, to nouzel and inure theyr Princes, with the secretes of this faculty from tender yeeres, besides, to minister an othe, that they should neuer suffer the dycredite, of so sacred and diuine a skill, nor fauour any man that sought to bring it in disgrace: as Nouatus made his Nouices to sweare, that they should returne no more to the communion of theyr godly bishop, what inconuenient and grosse deceites ensued heervpon, and howe lustily the people swindged off the cuppe of error, when the Princes had begunne to them for examples sake, and dispensed with abuse by charter of authoritie: the stories and recordes of former times, declare in the plainest manner? When the common people was amazed and perplexed very much, with the sodaine death of Romulus, (who, though the maner of the same, were hiddin and concealed, from the general enquiry of the world) was beastly murdered in the Senate house, a cunninge Merchaunt called Proculus, misdoubting least thys forward sprynge and expectation of a common wealth, like plants that neuer tooke deep roote, might easely be plucked vppe (by practyse of enuious and repi-

E.ij.

ning

De deuin.  
lib.2.

Euseb.hist.  
eccl.lib.2.

Liu.lib.1.

Plut.in Ro.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

ning neyghbours : ) in a generall discouragement start vppe vnlooked for, and publikely protested, that he was present and behelde, when Romulus ascended into heauen, and that he had receiued certaine light, by manifest and open signes and tokens, from hys owne proper mouth at hys departure, of the greatnesse and surpassing maiestie, wherevnto thys state should rise, in despight of all men aliue, that durst appose or sette themselves and theyr attempts against it. Not content with thys, within a while, an other witnesse was brought in to testifie, that a mans skull of exceeding quantity, was digged vppe in the very gates of the Temple : to prefigure, that Rome should one day prooue a strong and mighty heade, to commaunde and guide the statly members of so braue a pollicie. Others in like manner, to furnish out this stage and pageante of conceites : Vanas exterritis ostentauere species, presented straunge sightes and figures to the Cittizens, vppon their feare, as it is not harde to st engthen and encrease that humour, where it hath begun to settle. Vpon a common brute or rumore, that an Oxe did speake : euery man began to furnish and prepare hymselfe, to resist a common ennemye: but when the matter came to scanning, no man coulde finde out thys Oxe that spake, which was the coulour, but euery man coulde see, that the members of the common wealth, which were deuided and disordered by ciuil strife : were by thys deuise vnited in one body of defence, which was the reason. That very day, wherein an honourable peace was concluded, betweene king Edward the fourth, and king Lewes the eleuenth, vppon subscribed articles : it chaunced a white Doue, as Commynes writes, to repose her selfe vppon king Edwardes pauilion, wherevppon though many gathered an argument of amitie : yet since shee fate not equally betweene both the kynges, (considering the benefite of thys agreement redownded equally to both) I like much better of a Gascoignes obseruation, who hauing beene present at the sighte : reported vnto Phillip de Commynes, as himselfe recordes, that the Doue repayed to king Edwardes tent onely to thys ende, to refresh & prune her selfe after a greate raine, because the Sunne was warmest in that quarter. The Priestes of Egypt, made report vnto Vitellius the generall of Rome, that because the water bubbles in the Riuer Euphrates (vpon whose bancke the sacrifice was made) whorled, and ranne round about in circles like vnto crownes : therefore, hee should be called to the gouernement, but forasmuch as these slighte crownes appeared in a running streame, whose nature was vnstable and vn sure, Et simul ostenderet omnia raperetque, and had no sooner made a shoue of any thyng, but straightwayes it dispatched the same cleane out of sight : therefore hys Empire neither should, nor could haue any long continuance. Thus fared it with them, that went about to take full measure of theyr person, by theyr shaddow : which is full of error and deceite, as the larger

Phil. Com.  
in lud. II.  
cap. 17.

Cor. Tacit.  
An. lib. 16

we deuise to make our stryde, and the neerer we desire to steppe: the further we digresse from certaintie. To conclude, theyr Gods are Idoles, in respect they neyther are themselves; nor represent the truth: theyr temples vaultes of guile, theyr sanctuary subtiltie, theyr promise wind, their base coniectures baites for fooles, theyr coulours able to deceiue the wisest. Credulitie made simple men, to mistake the proper & true causes, for pampering of theyr owne desires, and lawlesse custome, brought a number at the length to take lyes for libertyes. But as the Battes and Moles, eyther creepe into darke corners, or digge vnder ground, and can not endure the light: no more can these blind prophets to be raunged by the rules of reason.

The last, but notwithstanding the most pestilent and bitter roote, from whence the Prophecies haue drawn their head, and receiued, as it were, their life and soule: is curiositie to searche and hunt for deeper knowledge, of the future causes and affaires of the Common wealth, then it pleaseth God to discouer and reueale by ordinarie meanes: As howe long the Prince shall raigne? Who shall succede and by what meane? What houses shall recouer or decaye? Of what qualitie the Prince shall be, with such like mysteries, and the reason why this fountaine is more pestilent then any of the rest: is cheefely, because it percerth and approacheth neerer to the quicke of mans delight, in so much, as I my selfe haue beene acquainted with some godly persons, and such as neyther doubted of Gods sure defence, nor lent their cares to winds of light report: which were notwithstanding, woonderfully rauished and bewitched with this intycing humour. But since it lyked not the Maiestie of God, sayeth Basill, to solute so many friuolous demaundes, as the phantasticall conceite of man coulde mooue, since neyther vnto Saule by dreames and Prophets, nor to Peter by the Ministerie of his blessed Angels, he reuealed all the chaunces of their lyfe, before they came to passe, and which enforceth most of all, since Esay teacheth vs, *Esa. 47. 11.* that many things shall happen, *Quorum ortum nescimus*, whose originall or cause wee shall not vnderstande: wee may bee sure, that he hath sealed vp these secretes in the decke, and that as Chrysostome writes, in labouring beyonde our strength: our hope can not bee so certaine to preuaile, as our ende to perish. For if euer any were, this is the floud: wherein a Goat may better swimme, then an Oxe can wade, and as we neede not feare, so long as our fete may rest vppon a stable ground: so when that faileth vs, although wee grope, as Saule dyd, while his furie lasted, in the darke, although wee seeke to flie with the wings of Icarus, and to mount aboue the sight of man: yet must we be content, to take the same reproofe and checke in thankfull part, from *Mar. 10. 38.* the mouth of Christ him selfe, wherewith he taunted the mother of the Zebedaies, demaunding things that were not lawfull for her sonnes:



## A defensatine against the poyson

2. Tim. 4. 3.

Act. 17. 21.

Histor.  
lib. 2.

Nescitis quid petitis, you knowe not what you aske, &c. But such is the pride and curiositie of that kinde of men, which, as Saint Paul reportes, Prurientes auribus, hauing an itche in their eares: heaped to themselves a swarme of teachers after their owne luste, and like those loytrours at Athens, whom S. Luke reprooueth: Ad nihil aliud vacabant, nisi audire aut dicere aliquid noui, attended nothing, but eyther to report or listen after newes, as commonly they preferre a quicke dog, before the carcase of a Lyon that is dead, a springing thorne, before a fading heartes ease, a future hope, before a present happe, a fallowe field, wherein newe Come shall growe, before a stubble, where the last yeeres croppes was gathered. But notwithstanding, duetie byndeth all trewe subiectes, to presume with Tacitus, that not the base, but Pessimus quisque diffidentia presentium mutationem pauens, &c. Euerie man that is worst disposed, falling by distruste in the present state, to feare such a chaunge as may vnrippe all the false stitches of their wretched life: prepare a certaine harbour and receite in future grace, by packing and combining with the persons that are likest to succede. Vnde nulla innocentiae cura, sed vitae impunitatis, not for any loue they beare to innocencie or ryght: but that their haynous crimes and dishonorable lyues, may bee left vnpunished. But howsoeuer they deceiue and dazell men, whose sight is fraile with colours of abuse: yet can they not compounde with God, who founde a meane to rewarde Achitophel in all his ruffe, and to teache him, that there is no banding nor conspiring, against the force of prouidence. Howe happye then good Lorde are they, which finding that the world is but a stage, and the pride thereof no better then a daizie in the fiede, so spend their labour and employ their credite: as they may bee bolde to iustifie the same, both in this lyfe, and in the lyfe to come, when the spyght of flesh and bloud hath doone her worst, bearing not in their mouthes, as the Serpentes doo, *γλῶσσαν ἀκροῦ ὀφρύος* the tongue of a very sharpe, or as the Scripture tearmeth it, of a double edged sworde: but in the verie center of their heart, a memoriall of the latter day, that they may not sinne for euer. The practise of good lyfe, is farre to be preferred, before the speculation of propheticall conceites, & to leaue a good report, rather then a register or recorde of vncertaine vanities: when we forsake this world, sayeth Pindarus, is *μείζων δαίμων* the seconde happynesse. But to proceede with that discourse I haue in hande, the lessons which a Prince must learne, that wyll beware of these enquirers after heires to Crownes, and prouide in time, that none presume to leape into their chayres of state and Maiestie, before their backs be turned: are not many, but for all that holden, of great weight and moment, in the course of former times, as appeareth by report of histories. The first is, that it is vnpossible for subiectes, which aspire to gouernment, to keepe

of supposed prophecies.

keepe any myddle course, inter summa & precipitia; that is, betwene the breaking of theyr neckes, and sufficing of theyr humours. The seconde warning is, *Nunquam satis fidem esse potentiam, ubi nimia sit*, that the countenaunce, credite and aucthoritie, which a Prince conferreth vppon any subiect: is no longer safe and trustie to himselfe, then he stineth and constraineth it within boundes of right, and lymittes of moderation. For many deputies, haue managed affayres of state with so great liberty: as neither they that called them to gouernment, could curbe them whe they waxed wearie of theyr pride, nor the persons that were rayfed and aduanced; could be brought to lyke of any priuate lyfe, after they were once acquainted with an obbsolute prerogatiue. We can require no playner president heerof at Rome: then wylie Sciahus, in Faunce: then the Duke of Orliance, in Nauarre: then the Counte of Lerin, in Arragon: then the Duke of Pennasiel, at Venice, then sundry of their Doges, in England: then King John, in Scotland: then the Duke of Albanie, with diuerse others heere at home of later tyme, whose treacheries, I rather chosse to shadow with a skreene of silence, that they be not seene: then to reuiue the blemish & reproche of theyr attemptes, with a freshe discouerie that the world maye woonder. It may suffice, that one of them conceyuing, though too late the cause of his owne decaye: seemed to wish earnestly before his ende, that he had bene neuer put in deeper trust, then to proceede in all thunges, by the lyne of iustice, and the rule of reason, for no man can determine or resolute, where, or in what sort, his race shall ende, that hath lybertie to wander at his owne will, and to raunge at his pleasure. Thirdly, kinges maye not forget: *Beneficia eo usque grata esse, quousque compensari possunt*. That benefites are so farre sweete and acceptable vnto men, as there is a possibilitie to acknowledge them by any meane: but after they were infinite: the greatest parte is rather bent to detest and toathe one, vnto whome they stand too deeply bounde: then to supplie theyr want of power with a surplusage of thankfulness. The fourth regard is taken out of Tully: namely, *Nunquam sat ato: nullis contineri finibus*, that they which are so farre, from beeing satisfied with any measure of reward, as they complaine of iniurie with Agrippina, because it is not free for them, to proffer wrong, or to drawe ploud when they lyst, or make the world to shake and quier, at the dreadfull sounde of theyr indignation: cannot bee confined within any lymites. Such catch-poles as we finde in Dion, haue euer bene the braue and lustie Malcontents, looking one waye lyke the bardgemmen vpon the Thames: when they bend their force, and stretch theyr armes another. Such was that crooked lybertin Callistus, who finding the succession of the Romaine Empire, to be marshalled vpon Claudius and his off-spring, for default of heyres of the Princes body: be-



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

Suet. in  
Caio.

Taci. Ann.  
lib. 1.

Dion. in  
Tiberio.

Dion. lib. 45

Esten de Ga  
rib. tom. 2.  
pag. 963.

came a sodayne instrument of future hopes, abandoning in most ingratefull and despightful manner, his noble maister Caius Cæsar, who onely had aduanced him to the height of his credite. So long as Tiberius kept himselfe close and priuate in the Isle of Rhodes, (after he was once proclaymed heyre apparant to the Crowne Imperiall) as well to shunne the ielousies of Courte (which neuer sleepe) as to recreate himselfe with hearing the Philosophers discourse (who rather drawe men from the vanities of outwarde pompe; then kyndle or inflame them with desire of rule) the grauest and most resolute among the Senators, were glad to take that harbour, as a sweete bayt in their way, because their Emperour, In esse, drewe neere to his ende, and chaunge of Princes, breedeth chaunge of fauorites for the greatest parte, if policie prevent not the sodaine whippes of the wheele of fortune. But after the sayd Tiberius had wunne the gole, for which he laboured by tranerse of the ground, rather then by rough and stubborne strokes: the same flethe flies & Leeches; which had worne and wasted his olde Father to the bones, gaue him ouer in lyke manner, when he fell into decaille by yeeres: insomuch as Macro, one of his cheefest freendes, without respect of duety or regard of fauour, reaped in his maisters raigne, was induced by sweete wordes of the next successor, wretchedly to stifle him, complaining of ingratitude, & that it was not possible to settle or to staye, the flyting and vnsstable hurthours, of vnthankfull ministers: which alwayes fall downe prostrate before the rising Sunne, and lyke Dolphines, wayte vpon theyr freendes no further, then the tyde wyl carry them. The Chaldaies and Astrologers, were daylie set on worke about these turnes and prophecies, which were deliuered among the common sort, according to the moodes and mindes of others, which erected all theyr driftes and polluries, to the setting vp of such a Prince, as might requite their paines, & estraunged diuerse from the course of their comon duty, which instabillity of tyckle mindes, induced Iulius Cæsar during his whole tyme, to keepe his Testament so close: as Octavius repaying lyke a priuate person after his decease to Rome, knewe nothing lesse, then that he was appoynted by his vnckles wyl, beire apparant to that empire. In like sort, the king of Portugal Don Manuel, finding his dropsie to increase so fast vpon him, before his iourney to the Baines, as it was not like, he should continue long, left Don Manuel his couzine germaine secretly: Edero por los Reynos, inheritor of all his dominions. And king Herry the eight, of late & famous memory, beeing earnestlie desired by consent of all estates of Parliament to determine bothe of the succession & remainder of the crowne, neuer gaue himselfe to thinke vpon the same, tyl extremities of paine & sicknesse, put him quite out of hope of full recouery. No prince aduise, had a more sufficient and seruiceable minister, then Ioaab was

Dauid

*of supposed prophecies.*

Dauid, so long as he was whole and strong: but after he began to waxe so colde, as no clothes could keepe him warme, he began forthwith to picke and make his hand with Adonias. For thirste of rule and empire, like a cloude of smoake, aspireth alwayes to the toppes, and such peeuisish hypocrites, as practise for no meaner bootie, then the regiment of mighty states (vnder colour of simplicitie, and burning zeale to iustice, in discharge of publicke offices) may want both strength and courage, to oppose themselves against the rancke of right: and yet for all that, after once the poison of theyr petegrees and claimes, are priuely conueied by whisperers and suborned instruments, into the peoples heades: they sometimes lay those Cockatrices egges in shade and silence, which shal be hatched afterwarde with the thunder of rebellion. (a) Venient dies luctus, pactis meis, et occidam Iacob fratrem meum &c. The dayes of mourning for my fathers death shall come, sayd Esau, and I will then ridde Iacob my brother foorth of the way &c. and yet it pleased God, to mollifie the tirantes heart with such remorse: as after meetinge with hys brother, he (b) embraced hym, and let fall teares, in token of repentaunce, so farre as we can iudge or dare imagine. The stories tell of one, that wrote vpon the gates of the Capitoll at Rome, in the time of Claudius, Post serenam nubila, sed nubila serena: and we reade likewise of a certaine Counte of Lerin in Nauarre, who desired beyonde measure, Ver alguna dia, quax supra fuesse, to see one golden day, that might be his: but God, who stoppeth the pursuite of bloode thirsty men, will croppe the buddes of wrekefull hopes, and snatch vpre sinners in the nette, which they set for the secure and innocent. I let slyp a number more, which not onely in the time of Nero Caligula, and other wicked Emperors of Rome, but likewise of the better sort of Princes in the state of Christendome: haue consulted with Astrologers and Comiurers, concerning secretes of this kynd, and attempted strange aduentures, to the perill of those very Potentates, by whom they were aduaunced: as Marco was by Tiberius, and Calistus by Caius, from beggery, to royalty, from disgrace, to credite, from contempt, to honor. Paucis iudicium aut reip amor &c, very fewe were guided in these cases, sayth Cor. Tacitus, by iudgement right, or zeale vnto the common wealth, many as they stooode affected, eyther in respect of seruice or dependence: recommended one or other to the rumoures of ambition. Thus plaid the Titeles, with great musters and stronge parties on bothe sides: till at the last it fell out in plaine prooffe, that they which were least likely to possesse an empire: were admitted to the same, and they which not onely wished, but deuoured it in theyr owne conceite: were intercepted by deuise, much like the flye Rowebuckes, which starting at the flight of an arrow, shotte by chaunce: are taken in the toyle (which they mistrusted least,) without recovery. For who can

(a)  
Gen. 27. 41

(b)  
Gen. 33. 4

Esten. de.  
Gar. hist.  
Nauar.  
pag. 57. 2.

Tac. Annal.  
lib. 2.

F. j.

tell,



## A defensatiue against the poyson



4. Efd 7. 25.

+ Epist. 48.

4 Re. 4. 40.

1. Reg. 8.

Iosep. Anti.  
lib. 16, cap. 8

Rom. 13, 2

tell, within whose hazarde Fortunes tennise balles will light, that haue rebounded in a multitude? They that call to minde, the straung successe which Saule and Dauid had among the Iewes, Vitellius among the Romaines, diuers Emperors in Greece, Huniades in Hungarie, Pogie Brachius in Boheme land, and Gostauus in Sweden: may wel conclude with Aeneas Siluius, that *Ludere fortunam dixisset antiquitas*, our ancestors would haue sayde, that fortune was disposed in these casis to disport & dally. Who can assure him self of any certain flight, whē checks are alwayes ready to disturbe the game? who can determine any mans good hap, that lyes vpon the chance of a thousande Dice? who can prescribe of any light from prophets or presuming fooles, when the light of commō reason wexeth faint & dimme, and affoordeth onely Vacua vacuis, that is, emptie warres for empty customers. It is not possible for any man, to discharge a single truste, that carryes not a single eye, we can haue no more kynges then Gods: and whose tongue soeuer lypeth, when he comes to founde our Shiboleth, belongeth not to the flocke of the faythfull. It is the guise of a cunning theefe, sayth *S. Augustine*, to withdrawe the sheepe or cattel from theyr wonted haunt, to the daunger of a common spoyle, by scattering sweete baites of prouender, in by-ways of deceit: and after the same manner, *Sathan* seeketh to entrappe fine wittes, and encrease bad humours. His gold is drosse, his corne is chaffe, his receites and compounds are of *Colloquintida*. *Mors in olla*, death is in the pot: & therefore as the children of the Prophets, gaue warning to the Prophet (concerning such an other banquet as this is) thou man of God beware of it. We can not laboure, for the chaunge of any lawfull magistrate, before the time expire, which God prefixeth in his prouidence: eyther for our sharper scourge, or for our safer benefite, he sayd not, that the Iewes had cast off Samuel, but himself, when they thirsted so much after Monarchie, according to the manner of theyr neighbours rōunde aboute: wherevpon we gather, that he counteth and esteemeth iniuries, againste his deputies and vicegerents heere on earth, as parcell of his owne dishonour. Moreouer, the most vnfortunate and badde successe, of certaine greene and wanton heads (which being not contented with the callinge, whereunto they were ordeyned by the prouidence of God, aspired vnto traines of greater heighte) may warne vs to demeane our selues more orderly, and as Iosephus writeth, *Vnum respicere regem, et pro principe habere et domino*, to fixe our eyes vpon one onely king, and holde him for our Prince and soueraigne. We must conforme our dueties to the compasse of his holy will, and howsoeuer wicked counsayles may be flourished or ouercast, with the shining Oyles of flye pretence: yet alwayes to retaine thys principle in minde, that whosoever resisteth order, resisteth him that planted & established the same, and furthermore that

*of supposed prophecies.*

that to stru: and struggle with his yoke, (who translateth and appein-  
teth kingdomes:) is but a tempting of his wrath, as the scripture ter-  
meth it. It is our dutie, rather to spend liues & goods with him or his,  
that sitteth in the seate of gouernment: then to consult with prophets,  
how long they shall lyue, or to thinke, that we are able to deminish any  
minute of a Princes raigne, that can not chaunge the coloure of one  
heyre, nor adde one cubite to our height, and in this respect, S. Augu-  
stine compriseth all enquiries of this kinde, vnder the title of a pesti-  
lent curiosite, a vexing and consuming care, and a wretched seruitude.  
Such simple folkes, are wont to cherish and to foster babies of theyr  
owne begetting, to presume beyond the limittes of a mortall state, to  
preferre the figure of a fauour absente, before regarde of a duety pre-  
sent: to stare vppon a golden hope, fluttering in the nest of ignoraunce  
before theyr quilles be stiffe, or theyr winges able to aduaunce them to  
theyr supposed altitude. They sacrifice to the Sunne with (a) Nero, in  
respect of hope: and with (b) Caligula to the glyding streames, for  
mutabilitie. But as we knowe, that God will haue the cheefest stroke, in  
poyntes aboue our reache: so may we be ashamed, that Cor. Tacitus  
a Painime, should descrie by the light of reason, what wee can not finde  
by the practise of our owne experience, Minore discrimine sumi princi-  
pem quam quæri, that there is least hazarde, in accepting such a prince  
in humble sorte, as it pleaseth God by prouidence to sende: then in  
chusing and selecting one, according to the compasse of our owne  
fancie. Ignoramus enim, quid conducatur nobis in vita nostra, for wee  
know not, what is fittest for vs in our life, and while the state is ballan-  
ced betweene hope and right: small matters are not brought to passe  
without great disorder.

Immoderate desire of honour, is the rest of a proude aspiring minde,  
and certainly men would not thirst for it, with such a greedy and vn-  
quenchable desire: if they rather tooke it for a burden, as indeede it is,  
then for a benefite, as the world beleueth. They that take the right and  
perfect measure of an image, consider not the base whereon it standes,  
but it selfe alone, and whosoever will examine, wherein we resemble  
God: must not regarde our fancie, but his fauour. Some, to archiue  
theyr eager wish, Pauorem sibi figurant, atque colunt, figure out a cer-  
taine feare before theyr eyes, and worshippe it: with Hostilius the Ro-  
maine, shrincking in a seruile manner, at the falling of the smallest  
leafe, others, with the venture of theyr whole estare, presume to scale  
the forresse of forstalled honour, as Cæsar did, and a third degree there  
is of those, which runne both horse and man into the lawes of Hel, with  
Decius: though not with that good minde, to reskewe or deliuer, but  
to ransacke and destroy theyr Country. But Pisos iudgement is without  
exception true, Neminem imperium flagitio, quæsitum bonis artibus

Dan. 2. 21.

Exo. 16.

Exo. 17.

De doct.

Chri. lib. 2.

(a)

Sue. in Ner.

(b)

Diō in Cal.

Anna, lib. 1.

Eccl. 2. 7.

Lact. de fal.

reli. cap. 20.

Tacit. Sat.

Lib. 3.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

exercuisse, that no man euer managed a state accordinge to the rules of vertue: which he compassed by villanie, for looke by what degrees and steppes we climbe: by like staves we keepe our selues alofte, and such as the beginning of our hope is: such is the ende of our fortune, **Eccl. 10, 20.** It is a notable aduise which the preacher giueth, not to detracte from kinges in our inward thoughtes: because the verve byrdes of heauen will descrie the same, and the feathered foules shall giue sentence against treason. A proper kinde of liberty, and a peece of trauaile of great moment no doubt it is, to risle in the misteries of Egypt, vtterly forbidden by the ciuill lawes, restrayned by the rules of pollicy, condēned by the worde of God offensive to the common peace of men, and no more refrainable within limits of regarde: then the Riuer Nilus is within a hedge of willowes. The Prophet Nathan, with discrete Queen Bersabe being very carefull to settle and establish, the remainder of the crown vppon her sonne: repayed not to Baal or Belzebub, to demaunde redresse of iniuries, attempted against that order which was taken by the kyng, nor to learne, who should succede in his authoritie: but to the king himselfe, as to the lawfull, next and ordinarie meane, neyther was her meaning, to enflame the rage and choller of competitors: but to preuent the slaughter of the people. Men may dispute of matters: but it is not possible to conclude, without assured knowledge of the will of God, and therefore, though poore Ionathas would haue made a close compacte with Dauid, by resigning his full interest to the crowne, vppon condition, that he might be but holden as a second person to the kyng: yet the couenant tooke no place, because God had disposed and resolved otherwise. The modesty and temperaunce of Ionathas, deserueth to be praysed in this poynt, who neyther grudging nor repynning, at the sentence of almighty God against his fathers house: abandoned those glozing prophets, whose aduise his father sought, although like traauilers they commonly report loude Iyes, not scanned by theyr owne good heede: but *Ex metu crediti &c.* eyther forged cunninglye to furnish out a stage with newes, or beleeued fearefully when sentences are amated. Was not then the counsel sounde and good, which king Ioas gaue to Amasias, (a) *Vt federet in domo sua, et contentus, esset gloria sua,* that he should sitte in his owne house at ease, and be contented with his owne glory? were not these wise men trowe we, (b) *Qui benedicentes Regi, profecti sunt ad tabernacula latantes,* which wishing well to the king (not dealing with his state) returned with grea-  
 roioy to theyr dwelling places? were we not behokling to S. Paule, who left this warning in recorde, that euery man shoulde rest contented with his owne (c) estate, & be rather (d) timorous then presumptuous and inquisitiue after matters, that are far aboue the reache of our capacity? For if God haue coceauled secrets in a clowde of maiesty fro those  
 of

(a) 4. Re. 14. 10

(b) 3. Re. 8. 66

(c) 1. Cor. 7. 20

(d) Rom. 11. 20

## *of supposed prophecies.*

of who he deemed & accounted best: what foole wil lighte his candle, at the lampe of false Samaria? or direct hys aime by the leuell of the false Apostles? Can Zedechias see more then Esay, or Phasur then Ieremie? O blinde abuse, that sealeth vppe the senses of the body, and ex- leth all the faculties of our vnderstanding. Tertullian a learned Doc- tor, of no lesse fayth then antiquity, reportes, that albeit at the first be- ginning of the Church, the wise men and Astrologers were dayly re- sorted vnto, by diuerse sortes of men for intelligence of future thinges, and chiefly touching Cæsars life, the propagation of his time, the suc- cesse of thys man or that &c. yet can it not be prooued, that euer a- ny Christia treated with them, about priuate causes of their own: much lesse, affayres of the common wealth or ciuill pollicye. Some may per- happes conceiue, that so many would not haue depended vpon prophe- cies, without some certaine ground: but these neyther marke the pro- per inclination and bent of nature, (alwayes to disport and please her selfe, with shaddowes and conceites of mutability, wherein she deligh- teth most) nor that truth is rather iustified by waighte then number. *Eccl. i. 15,* Stultorum numerus infinitus, the register of fooles is infinite, neyther can that schoole want Auditors, so long as Durat infernu æmulatio, *Can. 8, 6,* emulation, which is as harde and obstinate as hell, beares a greater stroke then humility: for as S. Ierome writeth to Iouinian. Quod mul- ti acquiescunt tuæ doctrinæ, indicium leuitatis est &c. that many gaue attentive care, and yeelded to his doctrine: was a signe of leuitie, be- cause they did it not for zeale to truth: but to bee flattered and smoo- thed in theyr vaine abuses.

It is not straunge, that man sometimes forgettes himselfe, and is eg- ged forward by aspiring thoughtes, to the quest of matters far aboue his reache, (for thys we claime by cleere descent from Eue our graund- mother:) but I wonder more, that in the midst of our gallantnesse and ruffe, we cast not downe our eyes with the Pecoche, to our ougly secte and feeble staves wheruppon we rest, letting fall those pecuish plumes of pride, which make vs braue against the prouidence of the almighty. For since God ruleth all thynges, both vnder and aboue the Moone, by order not by accident, since thynges prefixed in his holy purpose, can not chuse but come to passe, howe soeuer wee contende against the streame, since all laboures euen by the rule of Aristotle (whom some preferre before Esay) which eyther liand no scope or ende at all, or fur- ther not the fortune which wee seeke, are vaine, as Salomon in all hys maiesty, coude not make himselfe so braue as the Lyllies of the fiede, which neyther sowe nor spinne, if we can not adde one cubite to our stature, nor change the coloure of one heyre. If no (a) Sparrowe lightes vppon the grounde, which is the smallest accident that any man can thinke, without the knowledgo and foresight of God, no droppe of wa- *Phil. lib. 2* *Mat. 5. 36,*



## A defensatine against the poyson

Ier. 14. 21.

lib. 2.

(a)  
Ion. 2.

(b)  
Luk. 21. 30

(c)  
Ion. 1. 12.

(d)  
Tob. 6. 6.

(e)  
Mat. 17. 27.

ter falleth from the (b) clowdes, without his ordinaunce, and which is more, the very teares which trickle downe our cheekes, bee numbred in hys bottle: why should we foolishly presume, to found so deepe a channell with our shallowe sence, or to spend our hope in the chase of fancies that dissolue to nothing? For eyther thinges are so determined, as not presumption but prayer, not pryde but humblenesse, not the rich mans purple robe, but the sackcloth and ashes which carefull Ionas wore: is able by the mercy of almighty God to prevent the storme, and to diuert the plagues from Ninuie, or no such ordinaunce is set in heauen, and then what neede we runne away, for feare of our owne shaddow? Thus may we take our leaue of all contingentes, and of fortune theyr Soueraigne: which hauing none other vassalles, ouer whom to raigne and exercise her tyranny, then such, as are not otherwise at all, then in conceite must rest, content with that precinct and libertye, which a wyse man in Thucydides affoordeth her: quid enim fortuna aliud est, quā veræ causæ ignoratio. For what other thing is fortune, sayth he, then ignorance of the true and proper causes of all thinges, as if he shoulde haue taught, that whosoever vnderstoode the groundes and proper causes, of these contingentes as we terme them, and accidents belowe: could not be so simple as to wonder at such toyes, as are darke to the simple for want of skill, and cleere to the learned by the light of vnderstanding, or to make a Goddesse of our owne fraile capacitie. But because I woulde be loth that any man should be deceiued, eyther by equiuocatio in the worde, or ambiguitie in the matter: I thought good to, note by certain cleere and euident examples, that many thinges, seeme casuall and contingent to the weake conceite of man, which notwithstanding are determined, and regular in the course of prouidence, that is, sayeth Hipocrates *ἡμῶν μὴ αὐτομάτῃ τῷ ἄδῳ μὴ αὐτομάτῃ*. The Whale that came to deuoure the Prophet Ionas, may seeme to haue arriued in that place by chaunce: but the scripture testifies (a) *Dominum præparasse piscem* that God prepared thys greate fishe to receiue the prophet, for a greater setting forth of hys owne glory: and that he might prefigure (b) the buriall of our Sauour. The storme it selfe, which droue the Pilotes to this streight, may likewise seeme cōtingent to the glimse of carnall eyes: but Ionas sayd, he (c) knewe that onely for his sake the storme came vppon them. When Tobie gaue a strike, for suddaine feare of the fish, which came to swallow him, so farre as he could iudge: the Angell badde him drawe the fish to lande, and teare out his liuer. (d) *Sunt enim hæc necessaria ad medicamenta &c.* For these thinges sayd he, are profitably requisite for medicine. Wee might adioyne an other (e) fish to like effect, which for any thing that Peter knew, came in by chaunce: and yet he brought the tribute, which our Sauoure, like a good householder, payd for him selfe & his famelic, for if we first be-

*of supposed prophecies,*

begynne to seeke the (f) kingdome of God, and the rightwisenesse  
 thereof: all thinges shalbe supplied that are needefull. We may gather  
 by diuersity of opinions among the brethren, touching the manner of  
 dispatching Ioseph out of the way: that the selling of him into Egypte,  
 was but accidentall and agreed vpon, by reason of the fitte triuall of the  
 (g) merchaunts, while they were disputing and debatinge what they  
 were best to doo, and yet that very Ioseph confesseth afterward, that he  
 was not solde away by theyr (h) counsaile and aduise: but by the proui-  
 dence of God, that afterwarde obtaining grace in the king of Egypts  
 eyes, he might be better able to refresh and releue hys aged Father, in  
 a common dearth and misery. Againe what seemeth further in the sight  
 of man, from any certaine course or line of prouidence, then by the  
 glauncing of an arrow from the common marke, to kyll a trauailer  
 that passeth by the way: and yet God himselfe is sayde, (i) tradidisse  
 hominem &c, to haue deliuered the man into the hands of the shooter.  
 Who would not haue thought, that Phillip had arriued neere vnto the  
 place, wher Queene (k) Candaces chamberlaine shold come by chance:  
 till the spirite warned the sayd Phillip to draw neerer to the Coche, and  
 to conferre with hym aboute the true sence of the scriptures. Many  
 thought it was harde fortune, as they call it no doubt, that Iehosaphat  
 was so straungely made away: because the scripture telleth, that a cer-  
 taine man (l) hauing bent his bowe, and let slippe his arrowe at happe  
 hazard, without aime at any certaine marke, strooke the king by chace:  
 but heere I finde no lucke nor chaunce at all, otherwyse then in respect  
 of vs, for it is not onely generally true, that mis-fortunes shall lighte  
 heauily vppon our neckes, (m) Quorum ortum nescimus, whose ori-  
 ginall or cause we shall not vnderstande: but particularly woorth the  
 noting in thys poynt, that the shooter did no more then was denoun-  
 ced to the kyng, by the Prophet (n) Micheas from Gods owne mouth,  
 before the brunt of the battaill. Our English histories tell vs, of a Gen-  
 tleman called Tirrell, who shooting at a Stagge in the newe Forreste,  
 gaue the king his mortall wounde by greate mishappe. But whosoever  
 lookes into the iustice of almighty God with a single eye, and forget-  
 teth not what a willyng & attentive care, he giues to the cries of poore  
 Orphanes & widdowes, will soone conceiue, that fortune had no stroke  
 at all in thys: but enen as hungrye Dogges licked vppe the bloode of  
 Iezabel and (o) Achab, neere vnto the place where poore Naboth was  
 most vniustly depriued, first of land, and afterwarde of life: so did it  
 please God, that in the Forrest, which was set vppe with the ruine of so  
 many parrish Churches, wherin God was serued, and the great decay of  
 husbandry, wherebv the common wealth is maintayned, one of these  
 brute beastes, which was preferred before the fatherlesse and desolate:  
 shoulde be made (p) Gods instrument, in taking vengeance of vn-  
 chari-

(f) Mat. 6.33

(g) Gen. 37.28.

(h) Gen. 45.8.

(i) Exo. 21.13.

(k) Act. 8.19

(l) 3.Re. 22. 34

(m) Esay. 47.11

(n) 3.Re. 22. 17.

(o) 3.Re. 22.28,

(p) Pro. 16.33,



## *A defensatune against the payson*

Pro. 16, 33

Appian, li. 2

Cor. Tac.  
hist. lib. 1

charitable dealing, and all the rest should eyther licke hys bloode, or glut theyr eyes with the death of their princely benefactor. Thus falles it out in this case, which seldome failes in any: that *In quo peccamus, in eodem plectimur*. To conclude, though nothing in this world be more casuall then lottery, yet Salomon doth teache, that when the Lots are cast into the lappe, the providence of God disposeth them. He guideth all thinges, not by that golden chaine of causes, lincked one within another in such a manner, as they can not slippe, whereof the Stoykes dreame: but by the rule of order, which directeth our attempts to the scope of his owne pleasure. The warning of Spuria the great Astrologer, to beware of treason such a day, the dreame of his wife Octavia, the bill wherewith he was presented in his way to the Senate house, that very morning wherein he lost his life, with names of all the traytors and conspirators, that were confederate in a practise againste his personne: and diuers other tokens, (no lesse straunge then these) were rather meanes, sayth Appian, *ut videret, quam ut vitaret interitum*, to make him foresee, then to teache him how to shunne, or to prevent his own calamitie. *Que enim in fatis sunt, etiam presignificata non vitantur*, for though we be forwarned of those daungers and mishaps, which are decreed by destinie: yet can we not eschew the trap, whereas by depe reuoluinge them within our thoughts, we forgoe the comfort in the meane time of such fauoures, as are in our hand to reape, for doubts and scruples which no man liuing can deuise to remedie. Could the title of Perpetuus Dictator, or the Cappe of maintenaunce, or the purple robe, or the golden Chayre haue delighted Caesar: if he had foreseene, eyther by instructions of arte, or by the warnings of his dearest freendes, that euen those very Senators, which for the greatest part were eyther raysed by his bounty, or restored by his pardon, shoulde deiecte hym from the tipe of Empyre, to the downefall of destruction? Could any golden mine haue delighted Cresus, if it had beene reuealed before hande, that all his forcis being put to flyght, hys credite lost, and hys wealth in hucksters handes: he should likewise be bereft of his life beyonde Euphrates? What solace would the spreading branches of king Priams royall stocke, haue affoorded to his aged yeares: yf the flame, which wasted and consumed Troy to cynders, had blased in his eye? Let Cicero declare, howe little pleasure Damocles conceiued, of his dainty fare and regall seate: when he spyed a naked sworde, hanging onely by a slender threde right ouer him? It is therefore most certaine which a certayne Counte of Augoulesme, was wont to write for his posse: *Repentina leuiora, suddaine misfortunes, euer leaue the lightest impression of care*, and they that are expert in phisicke, holde it for a better course, to abuse the patient with greater hope the they find cause for increase of strength, so that the soule be carefully provided for: the

to

### *of supposed prophecies.*

to desery the perill of his state with discouragement of nature. To those that onely like of prophecies, because they make vs the more warye in absteyning from offence: I aunswer first, that wee may not doo that which is euill of it selfe, in hope that good may come thereof. Secondly, our owne experience doth teach, that many more are puffed vp with pryde, by such vngodly meanes: then reclaimed from the rage of sinne. And last of all, the warninges of our frayle and slipper state, are not so rare and deinty: that wee neede to repayre to the closet of false Oracles. God hath reserued secrets of thys qualitie, to himselfe alone, sayth a learned Father, and especially, the certaine knowledge of the latter day: that we may neuer sleepe in the lappe of vayne securitye, but euer thinke with godly S. Ierome, that whether we eate or drinke, or whatsoever els we doo, that dreaddfull trumpet soundeth in our eares: Arise you deade and come to iudgement. Let this be deeply printed in our hearts, and then a strawe for prophecies: for neyther surfette of exceeding ioy can make vs proude, when we remember that our flesh is dust: nor the stormes of care and sorrow, desperate, in respect of the tender mercy of our God and Saviour, who hath redeemed vs from Hell, and prepared a kingdome for those, that stedfastly belecue in him, and liue accordingly: It is inough, that we haue yeelded vppe both our selues and all our humours, to the care and prouidence of God, who feeles the pulse, who sercheth the secrete raines, and worketh in the minde of man, reuealing so much by the light of nature, or the beames of fauour, as is fit for vs to know, and couering the rest with a vaile of maiesty. Heereof we finde a figure in the flaming sworde, which gardes the passage into Paradise. If God be with vs, who dare stand against vs? if not? wee saile both against wynde and tyde, in which case, sayth Tacitus, a coward differs little in effect from a man of courage, a wise man from a foole, or one that worketh vpon groundes of good aduise, from him that setteth vppe his rest vpon the trust of contraries. Sic delusa sollicitudo quæ rentes est, and thus is the curiosity of those that are too busie and inquisitiue deluded. I coulde vouche a multitude of fitte examples, to declare how daungerous a thing it is, to build or to repose vppon these brittle staves: if I had not raunged them to a fitter place. I will conclude with Ajax in this matter, that οὐδὲς κενῶσιν ἄλγῶσιν διπλοῦνται whosoever is refreshed with vaine hopes, can not be a man eyther of greate courage or deepe wisdom. It were a folly to attempt with hazard, what may be spared without offence: since ignorance in this case, ought to be preferred before knowledge, simplicity before presumption, obedience before pride, and silence before curiosity.

By this discourse we see, what causes stirre vppe men, to quest vppon the prophets haunt, we see more ouer, how little good we reape by traualle in this kind, beside a large accoūt to be made heereafter, not onely



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

for vaine wordes: but for vnlawfull deedes, with mispence of precious time, in the studye of loose faculties. These vnluckye markes, are sette vppon the refuse wares, for which we seeke to pay so dere, and yet vayne glory so farre blindeth reason: as eyther we can not, or wee will not giue them ouer, but vse one droppe of abusing craft, as it were a sauce to bring in an other. Now let vs ransacke all the dusty corners, and deceitfull boxes of diuining artes, and serch what lycor is contained in the vessels, from whence the false prophets of this age, take vppon them to deduce their principles. I am not ignoraunt, that veritas est vna ac falsum multiplex, the truth is euer one, but the shifts of falshod are manifolde. I know the snares are infinite, which Sathan setteth to entangle and entrappe a multitude of simple soules, whom Christ hath saued and redeemed by the merite of his sacred blood: notwithstanding, I will onely deale with those, which are most daungerous to the pollicies of all estates, most iniurious to the maiesty of God, most pleasing to olde Adā most opposite to the simplicitie of truth, and best liked by the multitude, not doubting, but when we haue repelled the false prophets, not by force of paper shotte, but by the double cannon of the written word, and the peremptorie censure of the wisest in all ages, fro the courtines of presumption, which haue been garded & defended hytherto, with more opinion then approoued strength: they will returne to God from Belzebub, and eyther quite giue ouer to maintaine a wilfull course with wayne conceites, or at the least, they shall be forced to confesse, the weakenesse of theyr side by theyr faynt artillery. For eyther they deriue theyr giste of diuining, after Futura contingentia, from those groundes of witte and reason, whereby men are sayd to differ fro brute beastes, in the very substance of theyr kynde: (1) or from a secrete inspiration by dreames, (2) or from vapours of profounde melancholie, which drawes so neere to phrensie: as the chiefe proctors of that skill, haue very much to doo, in distinguishing both kindes aparte by diuers fourmes, (3) or from peculier and speciall influence, or vertue of some soyle, wherein it excelleth others: (4) or from the arte called Cabalistica, which at this day is scant to be founde among the Iewes themselves, from whom it drewe the first originall: (5) or from conference with damned spirites: (6) or from the planets which we may cal starre diuinity. As for diuination by fire, water, palmestry &c. I hold them not so much as worthy naming, where men are not wholly transfourmed, by Dame Circes witchcraft into beastes, and vtterly depriued of theyr senses. The deuill dealeth not with the finest wits, after that grosse manner and therefore albeit, Sagitta volans in die, the shaft which flyeth in the daye, be daungerous: yet is it in no degree, to be compared, Cum negotio perambulante in tenebris, with the terror which walketh in the darke, that is in obscurity.

Psal. 91. 5.

Nowe

## of supposed prophecies.

Now therefore to begin with reason; which no man can denye, to be the greatest gyft, that God by nature hath assigned vnto man : it is certaine, that albeit in respect hereof, we were appointed rulers ouer beasts and were created as I sayd before, according to that sacred image, which can not be named with too great reuerence : yet all thys while, wee finde no prooffe in Genesis of any future aimes, neyther is it sayde, that Adam in his greatest excellencie, was holden for a Prophet. The Scriptures are so liberal, in painting and emblazoning the mercies of almighty God vnto mankind : as it is not like they would haue ouer shipped, or omitted this diuine prerogatiue, which approacheth neerer to the seate of maiesty, if there had beene any glimse of such an ornament. I knowe, sayth Esdras, what is past, but not what is to come, wherewith 4 Esd. 4. 46 agrees the iudgement of the Poet Pindarus, whom the light of nature only induced, to the plaine confessiō of this trueth *συμβολον δ' ἔκαστος τις ἐπιχθονίων πιστον ἀμείν' πραξέος εἰσομαιναι: σὺρην δ' ἰοδεν* No man that liues vpon the earth, had euer any faithful or assured signe from the Gods, of things to come : excepting the chosen vesselles & selected Prophets of our Lord, which shall be formally distinguished, and sette foorth in theyr proper places. If any man demaunde the reason of our sweruing in this poynt, the booke of wisdomē telleth in plaine termes : that the thoughts of mortall men are timerous, and theyr foresight vncertaine, or as Saint. Basile writes. *διὰ τὸ πετυχῆσθαι τὰς πράξεις τῶν μελλόντων* because the knowledge of thinges future is concealed. The Poet Pindarus takes vpon him in an other place, to set down thys principle : that while the sequell is in the will of God, we mortall men may hope, but we can assure our selues of nothing : we may discerne of thinges, that are by sight, that were by memorye, saith Antigone in Sophocles. *πρὶν ἰδέναι δὲ &c.* But before the prooffe make shewe, *ὡς τις μάλιστα τῶν μελλόντων* no man is such a prophet of the future, that he knowes which way to direct his laboures. These men were no lesse perfite in the boundes of nature, then our selues, or if we list to make a difference, theyr credite is by so much greater in this case : as theyr bruse by falling from the seate of pryde, and confidence in theyr owne proper strength was more desperate, and yet theyr writings shewe, with howe greate modestye and bashfulnesse, they willingly disclaimed, what, eyther prophets challenge by abuse, or theyr disciples craue without authority. If a mans wayes be not hys owne, and if it lye not in him to direct his owne steppes : howe can hee lende aduise to others ? If we know not ouer night, what euent the next dayes toyle will bring : howe can wee pirce into the misteries of many yeeres to come, before the light of the verye thinges themselves be reuealed ? for though the heartes of men be no lesse manifest to the wise, sayth Salomon, then theyr faces in the water : yet can wee not diuine nor gesse by any other meane, then the course of their dealinges.

G.ij.

The

Ier. 10. 23.

Pro. 20. 24.

Pro. 27. 1.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

Eccl. 2. 19.

Iambl. de  
Myft. ex E-  
gipt.

The Preacher could not foresee, the quality of him that should be his  
heire, and whether he should prooue wise or foolish: and yet this com-  
meth very farre short of our presuming prophecies. The full course of  
our life, suffiseth not to scan the mighty workes which God doth dayly  
bring to passe within the worlde, nor to remember what is past: and  
yet we reache at thinges without the worlde, whose causes are inuisible  
Is it not enough for man, whose breath is in his nostrils, to admire the  
maiesty of him that made vs, in the thinges which were created for our  
vse: vnlesse wee seeke to fetch our wisdom from the clowdes? since  
Ipsū esse animi, the very substance of our soule, sayth Iamblichus a  
great prouler in the misteries of Egypt, is to know God, vpon whom it  
dependeth wholy for direction. Wherevpon S. Augustine, strippinge  
nature naked out of all her painted robes, disproueth all pretences,  
claimes and tytles, that may be put in by this couloure, to some parcell  
of Gods high prerogatiue, by thys plaine argument, that notwithstanding  
reason is a gift conferred, not vpon this man or that, but vpon the  
kinde of men in Genere: yet our owne experience, which is the surest  
guide, instructeth vs that neyther all men, nor (in very deede) any man  
excepting those, whom God doth rather prompt by fauour, then selecte  
by rule, hath eyther grace or gift to prophecie. If euer any man had  
beene so perfect in this gift, Ex meris naturalibus, whether we respect  
the fauour of almighty God, the place wherein he dwelt, or the pure-  
nesse of his minde, before it tooke attaint and was infected by the ser-  
pents guile: the same was our first Father Adam, who notwithstanding  
as we feele with smart, could not foresee the mischief that was, im-  
minent, before himselfe with all his offspring, were excluded from the ioies  
of Paradise. Philosophie dooth teache, that nothing is in intellectu,  
which hath not first beene drawn by fantasie from common sence:  
whereuppon I conclude, that future thinges which neuer came within  
the sence, can not be comprised in our vnderstanding. It is an easie skill  
to discerne and iudge of the present state, because the faculties and for-  
ces of the minde, conuey them out of one loope into an other: but  
whatsoever shall beryde or chaunce one whole yeere hence *ἡ ἀντι-  
στοιχία* can not bee discovered by signes or tokens. For albeit,  
Aristotle seeme to be of thys opinion, that God by nature hath im-  
printed fourmes and figures, of all outwarde thinges in our vnderstanding,  
from the first originall of man, and that our actiue vnderstandinge, by  
the fourmes which it receiueth in by the loope of common sence onely,  
geueth a cleere light to the passiue vnderstanding, by the beames wher-  
of it may more plainly beholde and discerne, the fourmes which before  
were couered, with a darke and misty vaile, within it selfe: yet touching  
prophecies, I make no difference at all, whether the fourmes, of thinges  
which we conceiue be let in, or onely cleered by the sight, because the  
light

*of supposed prophecies.*

light (without the which, our passiue vnderstanding can not possiblye discern it self) must as well be let in by the windowes of the cōmon sence: as if there had beene no kinde of impression by nature, in the passiue vnderstanding. Wherefore, as we can not discern the brightest coloures without light, nor heare without a sounde, nor smell without a sauoure, nor remember what hath neuer beene, nor conclude an argument without his partes: no more is it possible for our passiue vnderstanding, to giue a certaine gesse at any thing to come, because the same was neuer lodged in the common sence, nor transported by the fantasie. I stand the longer, in discussing thys direct and certaine rule, because although there be not any, which confineth nature more precisely with in limits: yet can it not but seeme obscure and darke, without some labour to those that are not learned in philosophie; The sence of man, or his vnderstanding rather (which is yet more light and quicke, transfourmeth all conceites, without any determinate or certaine subiecte, into diuers fourmes, and as a peece of waxe receiues the print of any seale, according to the present time, which afterwarde may notwithstanding, be put out or defaced by the fourme of an other seale: so may the mynde receiue, and afterwarde dispose and varie, what the fantasie presenteth, but to diuine of future misteries, which were neuer cast within the moule of commō sence, is a thing vnpossible to the feeble straines of humane capacitye. Onely God is able to beholde all thinges, both present and to come, at once, and in an instant: as if they were at hand, there are no limittes of succession or distaunce in his sight, his prouidence is infinite, in respecte whereof, the Stoyckes planted the pallace *vis in parietibus* aboute the Moone: and therefore the gift, *Annunciandi futura, antequam eueniant*, of declaring future thinges before they come to passe: belongeth onely to the depth of diuine wisdom. For though the reasonable soules of men or Aungels, which eyther neuer were incorporate in any mortall body, or hauing beene inuested once are notwithstanding, seperated & deuied from them by the stroke of death: eyther retaine the knowledge which before they had, or receiue newe fourmes without the seruice of the senses, after such a straung and extraordinary manner: as neyther eare hath hearde, nor tongue is able to reporte, yet since, it is beyond the compasse of theyr imbecillitie, to comprise all fourmes at once, as I sayde before, and to make present to their wyll, whatsoeuer liketh them to call to mynde of thinges past, to contemplate of the present, or prognosticate of thinges to come, which is onely proper and peculiar to God himselfe: therefore can they gesse no further, then it pleaseth God by extraordinary grace and fauoure to enable them. The Aungell which appeared vnto Esdras, could say nothing touching life, neyther haue the Angels of God any knowledge, of the latter daye: much lesse may wee presume of misteries

G. iij. aboute

Esa. 42. 9

4. Es. 4. 53.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

Sap. 9.15.

about our reach, in whom that rare perfectiō wāteeth, which those pure and vndefiled spirites haue. *Corpus quod corrumpitur, aggrauat animā* &c. for the body which is subiect to corruption, maketh the soule ponderous, and depresseth a deepe witte that museth vppon many thynges, and though we striue and labour by streight abstinence and watching, to abate and mortifie the pleasures of the fleshe, as Hilarius that blessed man, of whom S. Ierome writes, was wont to quallifie the pride of Adam, (which he called his vntamed and vnruly Asse) wylch chaffe, wherein is neyther strength nor heart to pamper wanton humours: yet this maketh not our soules more diuine, but more holie, not more presumptuous, but more humble, not more priuy to the counsailes of almighty God, but more pliante to his seruice. These godly exercises of a christian life, are winges, I confesse, to aduance our hope but no meanes or instruments to chaunge our nature. We can not certainly define of thynges, sayth Esdras, which grow vppe with vs from our tender youth, further then we gather light, by knowledge of the next and proper causes whence they come, and as the prooffe of former times may leade theyr ayme, *παντα γαρ τω καιρῳ καλλιστα* for all thynges are braue and gallant in due season. Against this certaine principle, that no mā alyne is born a prophet, (howsoeuer Ptolome would haue this skil to proceede wholly, *Ascientia et a nobis*) both from knowledge & partly from our selues: it may be, that some will obiekt the stormes, which wise men prognosticate in dealings and affayres of the cōmon wealth, by the light of long experience. Marriners and husbandmen by signes of obseruation, wherevnto this aunswer may suffice, that certaine causes worke so manifestly and apparently, to the common view and consideration of man: as we woulde rather deride and scorne him as a foole, then admire him for a Prophet, that woulde hope to purchase any credite by prognosticating theyr effectes: as that drought bringeth dearth, Autum nypperh fading leaues, hore haytes are companions of old age, &c. other causes there are, which first beginne, and afterward proceede to theyr effectes as it were by stealth, and after such a close and secrete manner: as if they be not watched, traced and obserued by degrees, they will vndoubtedly passe ouer in a clowde of ignoraunce. Thus husbandmen are dayly taught by practise and experience, in manuring soiles of sundry qualities, to know what ground is aptest to bring forth all kindes of graine, what temper of season giueth best successe to frutes, what windes offende the corne or blast the blossomes, what degrees of moysture nourish, what corrupt: wherevppon they gesse with better ayme, then men that are more wise in matters of farre greater momēt. In this respect, I thinke the learned in the ciuill lawes gaue out thys principle. *Peritis credendum esse in sua facultate*, that we must not build too stedfastly vpon the priuate iudgement and conceit of euery man in euery matter: but of such as are skillfull in the faculty which they

L. prospexit  
ff de inspic.  
veut.

*of supposed prophecies.*

they professe, because there is a kinde of craft in the meanest mysterye. The country men are wont to gyue a likely gesse, about the dayes of S. Vrban and Medard, howe the Vines will beare and thrue that yeere, not because the day giues any vertue to the grape, nor the saynts (whose liues and constant suffering for Christ, are solemnly recorded and solemnized vpon that daye) giue life and influence to Vynes about the rest: but because the very time and season, is a marke and measure of theyr forwardnesse. In like sorte, the inhabitants in Egypt are wonte to coniecture, what dearth or plenty shall ensue at the beginning of the yeere, by noting onely to what heygth, the floode of Nilus mounteth and ariueeth after an ouerflowe: because the long or shorte abiding of the water, declares what heart and strength the soyle receiueth. The Frogs are wont to make a noyse before the rayne, the Sheepe to shrinke into the Caues and hollow places of the Rockes before a drift of snow, the Bees to toyle & trauaile before weather: and in like manner, God hath giuen an euident and certaine light to euery living creature, of mishappes to come, for sauegarde of them selues, whereby the cunning husbandmen vse commonly, to direct their course in those kind of dealings, for albeit these prognosticating signes, saith Cicero, be not so manifest to common sence: Res ipsæ tamen obseruari animaduertique possunt, yet the thinges them selues may be noted and obserued. The Sheepeheards gessing onely by the nature of the winde, which carryes ouer clowdes and driues the Racke, are able to deliuer often tymes a better gesse of the change of weather: then the learned in Astrologie by the rules of their Ephimerides. The plowmā can distinguish Wheate from Barly in the blade, and Rye frō both, & one hea be from an other at the first appearing aboue ground: which perhappes would fet both Gesner and Matheolus to schoole, albeit both of them haue left large discourses, of the fourmes and natures of the simples to posterity. The Fowlers know by the fluttering and bathing of some birds, whē raine wyll fall, and as euery thyng consenteth in a kinde of Simpathy wyth thys or that humoure: so serueth it for a certaine watch to those, which seeke not for the proper reason by the quiddities and quirkes of arte: but obserue the course, which eyther seldōe or neuer fayles, by the line of diligēce. We reade not, that our Sauour Christ condēd those, that deemed of the weather that should follow by the rednes of the skie, nor those that gathered vpon the figtrees putting forth her leaues, that Summer was at hand: for that the causes and effects were tyed together, and combined in so streight a lincke of consequence, as either swerued not at all, or very seldōme, frō the course which kind had limited. He rather vsed thē as presidents of lawfull gessing & diuining, by the proper causes of al thinges: & therupon deliuereth assured tokens, wherby we may likewise gesse about the time of the latter day though the minute be cōtealed, not onely frō the sons of Adā, but also from the quier of Angels.

Cicero de  
diuine.  
lib. 2.

Mat. 16. 3.  
Mat. 24. 33

*of quier of Angels*



## *A defensatine against the poyson*

It hath beene euer counted prayseworthy, to raunge our gesses and coniectures, to those groundes and rules which haue a certaine holde; and therefore they that reache no further: may be cunning, but not diuine, diligent but not ouer deepe, prouident, but farre from the gyft of prophecie. The Marriners in like manner, by continuall obseruing the diuers qualities of winds, the difference of Seas, the properties of fishes, &c. haue beaten out such certaine rules of arte: as when clowdes begin to thicken in some quarter of the skye, when certain wyndes doo blow when certaine fishes leape aboue the water, when the Porpoises beginne to play, they will more certainly gyue warning, of a storme or perrye to come after: then we that neyther vnderstand the reason, nor obserue the manner, can imagine. No wise man will mislike or discommende theyr diligence, which serch the misteries of nature: so they shoote no further, then the leuell of theyr frayle capacitye will giue them leaue, for this Beseleel is sayde, to haue beene endued wyth the spirit of knowledge, wisdom and vnderstanding in all kindes of workemanshippe: though otherwise he were but a free Mason, & not able to prognosticate the ruines or enrichinges of that temple, which he sette vppe wyth hys handes. And albeit those Viri nautili, which Hiram sent to Salomō were well acquainted with the coast of Ophir: yet none of them could tell before they went to sea, whither they should returne home freighted with golde and siluer, or with Apes and Pecoeks. The Pilots which conducted Paule, knewe certainly by theyr Lyne, what depth of water the vessell drew: but not whither they should perrish or escape after the shypwracke, till it pleased God to reueale his will by the mouth of hys Apostle. The Phisitians are able to deliuer a verie probable and likely gesse, concerning any greuous sickenesse, that is like to punishe and infecte our bodies, long before the poyson styrre and kindle in the vaynes: by vrine, pulse, distemper of the body, coloure of the face, decay of appetyte, and a thousand other accidents, which are euident to arte, and obscure to ignorance: shall we therefore count them prophets? Whereas Galen thought himselfe to be disgraced very much, by that fonde conceite, declaiming bitterly against the prating Empirickes of Rome: who to deminish and abate the common admiration of hys learned skylle, gaue out reportes, that he deuined not by phisicke, but by prophecie. I venture the more boldely, to compare phisicke in this poynt with husbandry, because the learned Galenistes, haue themselues beene the first authors and deuisers of thys fitte comparyson. For euen as skilfull husband men, can gyue a likely gesse at any peece of ground wherein they neuer came before, by looking deeply and aduisedly in to the nature of the same, whither it be Clay, Chalke, or Marle &c. with what kinde of grayne it wyll best agree, though they knowe not what corne hath beene lately sowed, before it peepe aboue the grounde: so learned

Exo. 31. 3.

3. Reg 9. 21.

Act. 27. 28

Gal. ad.  
Post. lib. 7.  
cap. 5.  
De simp  
medican  
capio.

## of supposed prophecies.

learned Phisitions, noting and obseruing carefullie, the diet or complexion of any man, casting his water, feeling his pulse, &c. is able to deliuer a good gesse vpon the grounds of art, to what disease the body is most apt and subiect, either by distemper or by kind: and yet they cannot tell, what accident shall either diminish or decrease this sicknesse when it comes, what changes it shall haue, how many fittes, how dangerous, by what Phisition or medicine it shall be cured: since these stricte particulars depend, vpon the certaine knowledge of the state that is to come, which hath more turnes and windings, than a hare before a hound, by concurrence of accidents: though the reason and conceit of man, be not able to disserue the multitude. No man of vnderstanding either dooth, or euer did disallowe *προγνῶσκειν σημαία τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἡμετέρων*, prognosticating, or forerunning signes of things which haue already their beginning, though the same be not apparant to vnlearned or vnskillfull men: but fayned and supposed tokens, which haue neither anie secret lincke, nor coherence with those strange effects that followe. For as I hold him for a simple leech, that cannot find the plague in one that is infected with the same, before the carbuckle appeare, nor a plurisie, before the bag come vp, nor *τὴν ἀρχὴν*, tyll the bellie swell: so not I, but that blessed father Athanasius, enquireth of our prophet hunters, how they can swerue so farre, I will not saie from rules of learning: but from grounds of witte, as to make no difference betweene the Prophet, (who regards no kinde of ordinarie meane in declaring his conceit, but grace onelie from aboue,) or the Phisition, who walketh in the lyght of arte: and by due scanning of the circumstances, that concerne the person, time or place, foretels what euents are, not determinatelic, but verie probablie lyke to follow. Phisitions, as I learne by some of them, know not, Quando sit futura eris, otherwise, then by certaine forerunning signes: which giue plaine notice, by what meane nature seeketh in distresse, to be relieued and disburdened. The tokens which direct their aime, appeare not in the sphere but in the bodie: neither is the paine abated by contemplating the planets, but by discharge of humours. To be a Prophet, after Galens sence, is to be a learned man, and *Præcognoscere*, to knowe before, is not to roue vpon certaine aimes: but *Incipientem iam agnoscere accessionem*, to take knowledge by the proper causes of the fitte, when it is beginning.

Not all the citizens and inhabitants of Iericho, but Rahab and her household onelie knew, what grace & fauour appertained to the red lyst, that was hanged out of hir window. None but Dauid vnderstood, what those arrowes meant which were shotte by Ionathas, in signe of his fathers lasting displeasure, sauing Dauid: because the *Mor de gut*, or watchword, was resolved and agreed vpon betweene themselues in private

H.)

confe-

In vita Antonii.

Gal. comēt.  
in prorr.  
Hipop.

Iosua. 3. 18.  
1. Reg. 19. 12



## *A defensatine against the poyson*

conference. None but Elizeus could conceiue by the rising of a little cloude, no bigger then a mans fist, from the sea: what store of raine would follow after so desperate a drought, as had brought the people into great extremitie, because it pleased God, to make none but the Prophet priue and acquainted with his purpose, and in like manner, none but the learned in the grounds of Phisicke, can diuine of those darke accidents, which, as Galen wrires, *lam quidem principium generationis habent, sed propter paucitatem vulgo non sunt cognita*, Haue now a beginning of their breeding: but in respect of the slenderesse and finalnesse thereof, are not yet apparent to the vulgar multitude. And whereas some, to blowe lyfe into the carcase of these prophecies, De futuris contingentibus, a verre by warrant of Hypocrates, that manie things may be conceiued by the face alone: it will not serue nor reach home to their marke, because he treateth only in that place, of such distempers and infirmities, as commonly bewraye themselues, more by the face then by any other meane, as all obstructions of the liuer, of the splene, &c. so that no marke of phisiognomy, but an effect of some strange accident, beginning now to worke with mallice in the body: may be discerned and obserued in this maner. The ciuil lawes haue iudged and determined, *Nullis creminationibus implicanda esse remedia humanis quæ sita corporibus*, That remedies provided for the health of mens bodies, ought not to be disgraced with any kind of reproofe or obleyuie: and therefore we may seeme the lesse precise, in scanning scruples and pretended difficulties, about a lawfull matter. Reason hath her certaine bounds, and prophecie is not attained by endeuour, but inspired by free grace and mercie: whereby we see, that neither husbandmen, pilotes, nor Phisicians, may be called or reputed Prophets: though sometimes they light vpon a truth, which euerie common person cannot espie, because they range no further then the proper and next cause, nor take vpon them to conceiue any more, then others might attaine vnto with like heed and dilligence. With these we may compare and match, the wise men of this world, and generallles of forces in the field, who taking the title of *Prudentes a Prouidendo*, comparing practise with speculation, the presidents of former times, with the practise of the present generall conceits, with due regard of euerie circumstance that appertaineth to the cause in hand, and squaring out the plottes of graue aduise, rather by the line of sober skill, then the leape of arrogaunt temeritie, by the compasse rather then the wheele: not onelie represent the brunt of lamentable tragedies, in dombe shewes before they take effect, but furthermore giue order, how the same may be preuented and cut off by pollicie.

But as it is not possible, to keepe any certaine aime at a mark, which is alwayes chāgeable according to the tymes, as it is not possible to ouer-  
rule

L. eorum. c  
de Malef. et  
Mach.

### *of supposed prophecies.*

rule the cases of the present time, by examples of another age, considering the difference that may be found betweene them both, by regard of any slender circumstance to chaunge the point, nor alwaies to cure one mallady, with one and the selfe-same medicine, when alteration of quallities either in the place, the drugge, the person or the time, may disturbe the course: much more vnpossible it is, to shoot point blanke, not at a white; but at a fancie, which is quite without the leuell of our peece, and therefore, he that dares not euer build vpon the iudgement of the wisest man aliue, who hath reason for his guide: ought not to credite the vaine wordes of presuming Prophetes, whose lode starre is blind chaunce, whose guide happe hazard, whose learning imagination, whose gesses are farre lighter than the winde, and more variable then the rainebowe. For euen as he that soundes the depth of any witte, is better able to discern where in the same will profit most, then he that had neuer any taste thereof, as he that vnderstands, about what tyme the poste setteth foorth from Barwicke to London, is like to giue a neerer gesse at the time of his arriual heere, then others that are not acquainted with the circumstance, as the learned in Arithmetike, are more quicke and ready in casting ouer deepe accountes, then they that shuffle summes in grosse without either rule or order, or as we rather yeeld to their aduise, which are expert and skilfull in the stratagemes of warre, then of the wanton frie, which presume, according to the posie of our woorthy king Edward the third, Dulce bellum in expertis, that they are able by their witte and courage to distresse an armie, before they know which way to traile a pike: so they, which by comparing one time, one reason, one example, one circumstance with another, ayme by reason at euents to come, ought rather to be regarded, then a sort, who diuining by nowne adiectiues, which were neuer seene, felt, heard, vnderstoode, nor can stand alone: endeuour onelie to withdrawe men by the shadowe, with that scellie curre in Esope from the substance. Wise men diuine not, of the likelyhood or vnlikelyhood, of warre or peace, by casting vp a figure in a paper leafe: but by reuoluing states and humours of our neighbours round about, not by planettes: but by preparation. Againe, after the warre is once begunne, we gesse at the continuance thereof, not by dreames but by discretion, not by the good or bad aspect of Mars or Saturne: but by the good or bad conceit of mighty princes, that dwell neere together. This is the perfect scope of wisdom, others are but shelles of error: without any kinnell of effect or benefite.

The stories are full fraught with examples, of this sensible and respectiue kind of Prophetes, which onelie by the compasse of deepe wisdom, and the line of long experience: haue found such ready means to preuent mishappes, as light diuining fooles were neuer able to conceiue or vnderstand, much lesse to foresee & prognosticate. By this cleare light



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

- (a) of wisdom, Solon, as (a) Thucydides reportes, gaue warning of the tyranny, which should endaunger & infest the state of Athens, long before it came to passe : Quem (b) prudentem possum dicere, diuinum nullo modo possum, whome in this respect, saith Cicero, I can call wise, but diuine I cannot. By this meane, Fabius attained to the credite of an Oracle at Rome, and Thales the Milesian, by forestalment of the trees of Oliues, at such time as he foresawe by reason, what excessiue prices they would beare: became very rich vpon a suddaine, not for that (professing knowledge of philosophie) sayth Aristotle, he regarded wealth : but to giue an euident example to the world, that rather voluntary sequestration, from these lettes and troubles of a quiet minde, then blockish ignorance of any trade, to compasse riches when they lyst, to bend their studies and desires that way : was the very proper and true cause, why Philosophers were alwayes poorer & in meaner plight, then any other kinde of personnes whatsoeuer. *Canis hominis sunt sensus eius*, The hory heires of a man are his vnderstanding, not because the head is white : but ripe and soundly seasoned with long experience, wherefore as the gift of reason, which some call *Theologiam naturalem*, in respect it is annexed as a difference of kinde, and common to all men in generall, whether they knowe GOD or not : though with larger or lesser measure, as it pleaseth him that disposeth all, so by this rule and by none other, the wisest counsellours in all ages, haue squared out their plottes concerning pollicie. For howsoeuer Rome might take aduantage, by the peoples easinesse to be misledde, whereof I saide enough before : yet they that haue any eie of vnderstanding, or an ounce of witte, may finde, that men of deepe consideration and graue experience, were commonly the Prophetes which were called in to speake their mindes : when either counsaile was to seeke, or priuate quarrelles grewe to head, and beganne to fester, or the state it selfe, either by negligence of rulers, or the stroke of GOD, was brought into great ieopardy. The goddess, or rather deuilles, for *Dij gentium Dæmonia*, were consulted for a shewe, that the people might be made more feruent and more eger in recouering the losse : but their answeres were conformed alwayes, to the counsaile & aduise of the wisest and discreetest magistrates. It is allotted to Pericles as a woorthy praise, that no man looked deeper into any cause, nor foresawe thinges to come, either (c) further off or more assuredly, but how? Marie by great dilligence, sayth mine author, (d) *Inaudita inuestigandi, et audita perpendēdi*, of enquiring after things which he neuer had heard, & peyzinge matters that were brought to his hearing : and this may be the reason why the preacher telleth, that a wise man will alwaies hold and retaine fast in mind (e) *Narrationem virorū nominatorū*, the discourses or reportes of famous men, that is as I suppose, of such as haue beene holden.
- Thucid.li.2.  
De diui.li.2.  
Arist. Polit. lib.2.  
Sap.4.9.  
Psal.95.5.  
Thucid.li.2.  
Lact.in. de Orig. err. lib.2. cap.8.  
Eccl.39.2.

*of supposed prophecies.*

holden in great price and credite for their wisdom. (f) Memento dierum antiquorum, &c. Remember the auncient daies, sayth God by Moses, studie vpon the course of all ages, enquire of the fathers, and they shall tell thee of thine elders, and they shall declare vnto thee. And therefore, the Senate or eldershippe among the Iewes, was holden for an Oracle of such assured trust: as either to discredite, or suspect the same, was accounted disobedience, not because God wrought in them, by indirect and extraordinarie meanes, at all times when aduise was requisite: but because the maiestie of aged heaires, and the prooffe of wisdom had established a more sound conceite, then that the same could be corrected and controuled, by the malapart and saucie multitude. Diuitiacus, as we reade in Cæsars commentaries, could neuer be trained further forward by practise of the priestes: then to deuide his course in taking aime, Partim augurijs, partim coniectura, partely by auguration, and partly by coniecture, so that albeit outwardly, that is, onely for a flourish and to shunne offence, he gaue a reuerence to false religion: yet priuatly and in deuise of plots, he was guided by the line of reason. We finde that Ionathas, who neuer dealt with any forcerers or witches as his father did, could say to David. Tu regnabis, & ego tibi secundus ero, &c. Thou shalt reigne, and I will be the second person to thy selfe. But he deriued not this light from any gift propheticall: but from a dilligent and heedfull obseruation of Gods prouidence, which ranne vpon his father and his house with so strong and violent a tide: as could not be resisted by the bankes of pollicie. The Sentinell, who kept the watche ouer Dauids gate, seeing Chusai runne with hasty speed, repayed not for counsell to false Prophets, that he might be priuie to the newes he brought: but concluded with himselfe, that the tidings was not euill, as it seemeth vpon this assured ground, that none but fooles make haste, to bring heauy newes to the eares of princes. The ministers of Benadab presumed verie rightly, touching the sauing and preseruing, both of their maisters life, and of their owne, but it was vpon this ground, Quod Reges Israel clementes essent, that the Kinges of Israel were merciful, though we reade not of any Prophet at their elbowe. It is reported in the scriptures, that the mouth of Salomon could not (a) erre in iudgemēt, and againe, that there was no misterie (b) concealed from the King: insomuch, as he was not ignoraunt of the property of any hearbe or plant, from (c) the Cedar trees in Libanus, to the Pellitory roote that growes out of the wall, not by the gift of prophetic, wherein he wanted of his fathers skyll: but by prerogatiue of wisdom, which GOD gaue him in a larger and more ample measure, and therefore when the strife arose about the childe, he resorted onely to the reason of a pregnant witte: not to the prompting of a glozing Prophet, for resolution (d) in the matter: for how can any man

(f)

Deut. 32. 7.

Comen. li. 3

1. Re. 23. 17.

2 Re. 18. 25.

3. Re. 26. 31.

(a)  
Pro. 16. 20.

(b)  
3. Reg. 10. 3.

(c)  
3. Reg. 4. 33

(d)  
3. Reg. 3. 27.

H. iii.

esteeme



## *A defensatime against the poyson*

Doct. histo.  
hb. 7. cap. 17

Esteu de  
Garib hist.  
di. Nauarre.

esteeme her, as a naturall and louing mother, which would rather quarter & deuide her childe in halues: then suffer the same to be brought vp and nursed by another woman. A certaine wicked lewe, perceiuing the great zeale and bounty of the true professours of the faith of Christ, in releeuing and maintaining those, which pretended any looue or fauour to the truth, and supposing all to be well gotten which was gleaned from an Infidell (as they reputed vs) found out a knauish stratageme, to consume them & to enrich himselfe, which was, by crauing to be baptized at sundry times & in diuers places: all the faithfull brethren yeelding & contributing their charity, according to the maner to so good a purpose. Thus hauing mocked & deluded many, but most of all himselfe (in respect of plagues to come:) his happe was at the length, as God would, to light into the hands of Paulus the Nouatiā bishop, who finding the water which was put into the font for this sacred vse, to be dried vp without any certaine or apparent cause: conceiued herevpon, that so strange a signe could not fall out but vpon some extraordinary chaunce, & therefore told the Jew, that either he had receiued the sacrament of baptisme vnawares at some other time, in respect whereof, it stood not with the will of God, to suffer iteration by oversight. or els he made the same an instrument of wicked & vlawfull gaine (as Simon Magus would haue doon the gift of miracles) which stood not with his honor to neglect or leaue unpunished. The bishop was an heretike, & therefore not inspired from aboue; his sence and reason only lead him to diuine, that miracles are neuer wrought: but either to establish faith, or to discouer infidelity. Dionisius Areopagita, first a graduate of Athens, & afterward a scholar of S. Paul, perceiuing the most strange eclipse of the sunne that euer he beheld, at that very instant, wherein our sauour Christ endured the most bitter pangs and torments of the crosse: pronounced with a pre-emptory voice, that either God himselfe was surcharged and oppressed with great violence: or else the frame of all the world should be dissolved in a moment. The Spanish histories report, that Katherin Queene of Nauarre, who cast herselfe away, by matching with Dalabret, a noble man of Fraunce: prognosticated to her husband, after he had lost the greatest parte of his forces, that neither he nor any of his offspring should euer repesse the crowne, which words may seeme to carry great auctority vpon the first conceit: but if we call to mind, how like it was that the Frēch Kings teares, for whose sake only she receiued this harde blow, would be wasted & dried vp, In alienis malis, in his freends distresse, that all the Popes would iustifie from time to time, what was pronounced in that cause by their predecessour, and how hard a labour it would be for those, that could not keepe it whyle it was their owne, to wrest it from so strong an enimie, & last of all, that Nauarre hauing ben once vnitied to Castile & Arragon: would neuer be dislincked without a shar-

*of supposed prophecies.*

a sharper warre, then either she, or any was like to descend of her body, should be able to maintaine: will find some reason to comend the Ladies wit, but none to publish or esteeme her as a prophetesse. The moorish prophets, prognosticated to the king of Granada Mahomad, that before it were long, he should lament & rue with helples teares, the surprising of Zahara: & no maruell, since it was the keie of their estate, as Barwike is of England, Callis of Fraunce, Dunkirk of the low coutry, Beioais of Nauarre, and Millan of Italic: so that by these examples altogether, & by euery one of them, we may be taught to deeme of all professors of this guilefull trade, which sell the labour of their lips, & the practise of their busie heads: for the prise both of bodies & soules together. Besides this colour and pretence of prophecies, & secret inspiration from the gods above: both is & euer hath been, a vaile or shadow for aspiring thoughts, which being puffed vp like empty bladders with a wind of pride, neuer leane rebounding from one hazard to another, tyll either they obtaine the prise, or miscary by to great presumption. This might be proued, by a multitude of apt & fit examples for the purpose: but to be short, I will onely vouch certaine of the moorish Monarchy, and one aboue all the rest, of Aben Thumier a doctor in Astrology, who finding without any lyght or helpe of his Ephemerides, that the royall of-spring of the race of Almocauides, had arriued with great fortune to that race and stint of time, wherein the tymes of other houses, as it were by destiny, had made an ende, beside, discovering the moods and humours of the vulgar sort, according to the touch of Affrike, to be so loose and tickle of the seare, as there wanted nothing but a leader, of great courage and deepe wisdom to begin the game, againe, concluding with himselfe, vpon a diligent and straight examinatio of the forces on all sides, that if the cards might be brought once to the dealing, of a close & constant freend, the cūing packe which had been layde together by long sufferance, might passe for winning of the golden rest: made choyse of a certayne young fellowe called Abdelmon, of a passing hauty minde and ready witte, to become an instrument, or rather a cheefe personne and director of this enterpryse. His parentage indeede was base: but notwithstanding, so well couered with graces of his person, and rare giftes of nature, as the world was willing: either not to note it, or content to pardon it, of which two courses, cyther serued fitly for the purpose of the Doctor. But when the qualities of him, that should sustaine the cheefest brunt, sufficed not without some other sle deuisse aboue the common reach: this scribe, presuming with the craftie rebell Ieroboam, that so long as the minds of men were rooted in theyr former faith, and grounded vpon the principles of auncient simplicitie, it would not be so easie, to diuert them fro their woonted course of duty & obediēce vnto the king: Entroduzio noudades en religion, brought in an innouation of religiō, pretending

Esten. de  
Garib. hist.  
delos Mo-  
ros.

3. Re. 12. 27.

Esten. de

by



## *A defensatime against the poyson*

Gar. histo.  
de los. mor.  
1023.

by his iudgement in the starres, that the gods would haue it thus, and so first ouerthrewe the royall stocke, and then established newe formes of gouernement.

The p'orte was layde by presuming & aspiring hopes, maintained by deuise of wit, concealed with the dark & sullen colours of hipocrisie, and altered according to the circumstances of the persons, tyme and place, by such a close Achytophel: as vsed wisdom for his compasse, art for a colour, and courage for an instrument. Another prophet of that filthy moorish kinde, proclaimed in the market place of Granada, that either his markes and Oracles abused him, or the ruine of that kingdome was at hand: but surely, I repute him not so woorthy of a Lawtell, for aduising when the danger was past cure: as of blowes for not speaking sooner, whyle the Moores of Affrike, who were greatly maymed by the losse of Granada, might haue adioyned strength for reskew of their neighbors. But what were his markes and Oracles in the name of God? Forsooth, the very same that made the Iewes mistrust the ruine of their temple: and would make the wisest man aliue, without the prompting of a Prophet, to suspect and feare the spoyle of hys owne countrey. For first, the ciuill warre within the bowelles of Granada, between the Nephew and the Vncle: was endlesse and irreconcilable, their pouerty exceeding great, their hunger infinite, & the peoples harts quite broken & discouraged. Their allies in Affrick seemed altogither cold and carelesse in affording ayde, the king of Castile howered aboue their heads, so seythe vppon his wished pray, and whereas all their hope and courage should haue rested, in the trust and confidence of their owne strength at home: the countrey was so quartered with ciuil strife, as I sayd before, that, according to the Maxime of our sauour Christ, it could not long continew.

Matt. 12. 14.

Polibius, sayth Homer, told his sonne, that he should neuer returne home from Troy, but with the lyke stratageme to that, whereby one vndertooke to teach an Asse to speake within the space of seuen yeere: so that his lyfe might be respited. For euen as there was great oddes, that within that tyme, eyther the man to whome the bonde was made, or he that was bound, or the simple Asse would die, in all which cases the bond was voide & of none effect: so was it no lesse probable, that in so dangerous a iourney, so long a time of absence, so desperate a peece of seruice, among so many wrackes by sea and perilles vppon the land: eyther one mishap or other, would make an end of this young gentle man. Euents, sayth Hannibal, are not lesse answerable to mans hope in any thing: then in warre, and therefore they that wander furthest fro the beaten way: may sometime, perhappes, diuine with greatest probabilitie. Beside, the care and kindnesse of a louing father, ought to be regarded somewhat in this case, who supposeth all offences to be present

*of supposed prophecies.*

sent that are possible : wherefore to conclude, though pilotes, husband-men, and counsaillours of state foresee many thinges, eyther by experience or obseruation : yet theyr ayme proceedes by rule and not by reache, and those are taken by the wiser and more heedefull sort, to bee most certaine groundes, which are esteemed blanckes and shaddowes by the simple. The first instinct of presumption and pryde, beeing quenched by obedience vnto the will of God : maketh a more ready passage to the rewarde of humility, and therefore. (a) *Beatus qui allidit paruulos ad petram*, Happy is he that crusheth these little ones againste the Rocke : or that setteth snares and gynnes, (b) to catch the little Foxes that destroy the Vineyarde. (a)  
Psal. 135, 12.  
(b)

No man aliue, can proue so streight a kinred or affinitie, betweene an accidentall signe and a corruptible substance : as may gyue a light or foyle to future imaginations, For God, sayth the Preacher, made mā single and vpright, Et ipse se infinitis immiscuit quæstionibus, And hee entangled himselfe with questions that were infinite. Wee knowe that men are images of God : but no gods indeede, that our wittes may deeme : but not diuine, forecast vppon occasion : but not prefigure without certainty, least in rayning fortes of fancye to the clowdes, lyke the spyre of Babel : we forgoe the knowledge of our selues, & be cast into the gulfe whereof there is no bottome. *Terrenum enim hoc animal &c.* for this earthly creature being altogether ynable, saith Lactantius, to comprehend the maiesty of heauenly thinges : is detayned, and, as it were, locked vppe in a kinde of prison, so that it can not iudge by so cleere a light, nor resolue in so francke a manner. Thus hath it pleased God, to confine the reason of a man wythin certaine limits, as I sayd before, which whosoever seeketh to exceede, by contēning the decrees of God : is lyke to reape a bitter fruite, aunswerable to so corrupt a seede which is misfortune for presumption, and error for iniquity. How farre the witte of man may reache : we learne by this, how dangerous it were to swallow more then we are able, to digest the great mishappes of others : doo declare, though we should forget the surfette of olde Adam, that is the losse of our libertye. Cant. 2, 15  
Eccl. 7, 26

Next to that, natiue reason, whereby men are sayde to differ from brute beastes, some holde, that melancholy rayseth and aduanceth our conceites more gallantly : then any other humoure whatsoever. But for mine owne parte, as I can not denye, that diuers persons deepe ly touched in this kinde, haue excelled for the sharpnes of theyr wytte : so, though we should confesse them to be wisest amonge men, which Tully neuer graunted but against his will, because himselfe was of another streame : yet may we not presume, to make them equall vnto God himselfe, who resigneth not to nature so great an interest in his owne prerogatiue. We knowe, that melancholye participateth most of earth,

I. j.

which



### *A defensatiue against the poyson*

which is most grosse and ponderous : and therefore opposite to fine co-  
ceites, which spring from the finest & most subtile humore. And though  
some labour to extenuate the pyth of this playne demonstration, by  
distinguishing melancholy into two diuers kindes, whereof one hauing  
beene digested by the lyuer throughly, swimmeth like a kynd of flower  
on the toppe of bloode, an other sincketh to the bottome like the Lees  
of wine : yet must we needes confesse the brighter of them both, to re-  
semble that obscure and mistye vayle, wherewith, as in olde time the  
grace of Venus : so nowe the lustre of our wittes and senses are eclipsed.  
Can any man, which hath but lightly tasted the sweete Lycor of Philo-  
sophie, deeme, that by continuall agitation and styrring of the braine,  
whereby the melancholy matter is increased and augmented very much  
the moysture of the same, whereon our natie heate should feede, is wa-  
sted and quite dried vppe, and that our vitall spirites, standing euer bent  
by thys meane like a bowe, waxe weaker and forgoe the greatest parte  
of their vertue? I thinke not, or if he doo : the schooles will hisse him  
out for defending so vaine a parrodexe.

Againe, as melancholy seeketh ease and shunneth exercise, which  
ought to quicken and reuiue declining partes to spend grosse superflui-  
ties, and furthermore, to disperse all windy matter, which is most offen-  
siue to the brayne, as appeareth by the lesson which Pithagoras gaue  
to hys schollers, in no wise to eate any Beanes : so by the rust of idlenes,  
the sharpest edge of wit is taken off, inuentio decaies, memorie waxeth  
weake and shallow, and euery gyft or faculty of the reasonable soule of  
of man : becomes lesse strong and able, eyther to foretell by prophecy  
what is to come, or to conceiue by reason what is fittest for the present.  
The properties, or rather accidents inseperable of this pensue humoure,  
are φόβος *φύλαξις* *μισανθρωπία* feare, greefe of mind, and detesting of hu-  
maine society : which one accident alone, without the rest, if Aristotle  
may be called in, and admitted for a iudge, maketh those whom it pos-  
sesh wyth a kynde of tyranny : Aut Deos, aut Dæmones, that is, eyther  
so diuine and voyde of all contagion of vice, as we may repute them  
more then men : or so retirate, close and mischeuous, as we should shun  
them more then Satires.

Polit. lib. i.

Let Plutarche tell vs, in what wretched and vnhappy plight that Ti-  
mon liued, who could not abide the sighte of any man alyue, and by  
what meane he fell into this fonde, or rather brainsicke and fanaticall  
conceite : that we may beware of those, that strayne Oyle out of a Flint,  
or Methridatū out of Colloquintida. It was a rule of great importance  
which Iamblichus gaue, to remooue out of our mindes : Quicquid  
villo modo simile est imaginationibus vllis, quas humores simileque  
causa suscitant &c. Whatsoeuer resembleth in any poynt, those imagi-  
ons which are stirred vppe by humours and like causes, when we fall  
to

De Myster.  
Ægypt.

## *of supposed prophecies,*

to diuine of matters that are future. He declaimeth furthermore against Porphirie the blinde Philosopher, for defending Vaticinium esse passionem phantasiae talem, qualis accidit melancholicis, &c. That prophecie was such a kinde of passion of the phantasie: as chaunceth vnto melancholy persons. Nulla ergo sunt data præparamēta seminaque a natura, vel communi, vel humana ad vaticinium illud, quod est supra naturā intelligentiam que humanam, &c. Therefore nature, sayth he, gaue no preparatiues, nor seedes of prophecie, concerning things which are aboue nature and humaine capacity. Paulus Aegineta recounteth a discourse of certayne persons, so farre ouershotte with this eluish humour: Lib. 3. ca. 14. as sometime they thought themselves beastes and birdes, with winges and hornes, &c. and which is more, not satisfied with this straunge speculation without a straunger practise: they beganne μιμιᾶσαι τὰς φωνὰς αὐτῶν, to immitate their voices, not vnlike to fonde Pithagoras, who seemed to remember the tyme, since he was a cocke at the siege of Troye, and afterward I knowe not what beside: onely to perswade his schollers to beleue, the transmigration of fowles out of one forme into another. I haue heard of others, that supposing theyr bodies to be made of glasse: durst not iustle in the streete with any man, for feare of breaking into shiuers. τὴν μετὰ τὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, and that some, eyther laughed euer with Chrisippus, or lamented euer with Democritus.

Charles the seuenth of that name, vpon a straunge misconceite without eyther ground or probabilitie, that his owne sonne would committe him to safe keeping: tooke so deepe a thought, as afterwarde he would neuer receiue any thing to sustaine nature. Plat. comēt. cap. 127. Alphonso king of Naples in lyke manner, hearing rumours of the french Kinges purpose Idem. cap. 17 to come into Italie, grew so timorous and fearefull in a melancholie fitte: that he supposed the verie trees and stones to proclayme his interest, and take armes against him. A number more, eyther for loue or hate: haue beene haunted with lyke fancies, whome Thucidides most Lib. 3. fitly calleth, Absurdarum opinionum seruos, the bondslaues of absurde conceyts, in respect, that whatsoeuer may be, they presume to be: and sometimes also, what is most vnpossible, as for a man to bring forth a childe, to let out claret wine in steede of bloud, &c. Now whereas some, to saue the credite of this humour, would ascribe all fearefull passions, wherewith the minde is altered and affrighted daylye, vnto Atrabilis, which hath not his originall from nature: but proceeds of accident, &c. The best way to disprooue them, is to set downe by the rules of phisicke, what a doo there is, before the meane, which leadeth to this future ayme: may be determynd. For if the quantitie and proportion of the true melancholy be so scant (saye they) as it is not able to repress the windinesse of starting bloud, to quallifie the rage of choller, and



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

establisht fleeting spirites in such weight and measure, as is requisite in this degree: then dooth it make our iudgement lyght and tyckle of the seare, if the current be too strong and flowe to fast: it rebates the finest edge of witte, and where is none at all, we finde no residence saue grosse simplicity. Therefore some melancholie there must be, as the learned write, for a ground of iudgement, then the same must be in substaunce thinne, in proportion moderate, not drowned, but refreshed with the lyghtest part of fleame: and yet when all is doone, it is but like the spirit of the strongest wines, which leeseeth not the proper heate by passing thorough sundrye flames: but waxeth farre more mightie, strong and forcible in operation. And euen as when an vncleane spyrite shall goe out of a man, he walketh thorough drye places, seeking rest and findeth not: then he sayth, I wyll returne vnto my house from whence I came, and comming in, findeth the same cleane, swept with beesome, and trimmed vp: then goeth he, and taketh seuen other spyrites vnto him more wicked then himselfe, which enter in and inhabite there, and the last of that man is made worse then the first: so fareth it with those that are possessed by this humor, as appeareth by a multitude of dreadfull accidentes, which are occurrent in the course of our ordinarye conuersation, for where the water seemeth styll and silent: the foord is deepest. Qui attonitis oculis cogitat praua, mordens labia, perficiet malum, he that thynketh euyll thinges, with eyes astonished and byting his lippes, wyll doo mischeefe: but Confundentur omnia profunda fluminis, &c. all the deepest places of the foulds shall be confounded, and the scepter shall be transported from Egypt. Woe be vnto you, sayth Esay, that are profound in heart: for the wicked shall be repelled in theyr malice, and againe. Qui operit odium fraudulentum, reuelabitur malitia eius in concilio: The poyson of that man shall be reuealed in an open councell, which fraudulently cqueieth and concealeth his malice.

For myne owne parte, when a Lybarde shall forsake her spottes, or a blacke Moore his hew, when eyther the Foxe or *ἐρίβρομος λεωντής*, the roring Lyons leaue the courage or the crafte of kinde: I wyll likewise hope, that a melancholy man may become a Prophete, for as such personnes commonly pretend to see more then is true: so they preuent lesse then is requisite. The reason may be drawne out of the Prouerbs, where it is affirmed, that a slouthfull man is ouerthrowne with feare, and commonly we finde, that men distracted into diuerse wayes, (as Grimany noted wiselie in the Senate house at Venice:) preuaile in nothing for default of resolution. For whyle some cauill vppon causelesse feare, others execute according to the present oportunitie: and therefore he that is afrayde of euery starting gralle, may not walke in a meadowe. The minde, some saye, may search, more deeply with so quicke

an:

*of supposed prophecies.*

an instrument, and discerne more easily by so cleare a lyght : what eyther may be reached by the rules of arte, or discerned by light of nature. But how stand these together : when the melancholie fitte is more often holden by the learned, for a vayle to shadowe, then a lanterne to discover ? Beside, those men whome we maye rightlie reckon and account as melancholie, deeme by the patternes which haue been, what is like to be : but are neuer woont to aspire aboue the clowds, for knowledge of those mysteries, which neyther are, nor euer were imprinted in the workes of nature.

For as the Samaritane alledged vnto Christ, where the well is verie deepe, and we haue not wherewithall to drawe : we are not so lyke to slake our thyrst, as to leese our labour. So long then as this humour keepes within a meane, it maketh vs discrete, if once it ouerflowe the bankes of moderation : we become more wilfull then wise, more fearfull then freendly, more slowe then sensible, more presumptuous then prouident. If any lyst to giue it yet a founde and more speeding blow, let him ponder with himselfe, that the least defect of full and perfecte measure breedeth follie, the least excesse dissolueth into phrensie : and sooner shall a man finde out a pure virgin in Sodome, then a true Prophete in the caue of melancholy. But why should we so much wonder at their ouersight, which ascribed prophecie to this perplexed and vnquiet moode : when not Dicearchus onely, who maye walke among the giddy fooles : but Plato the Prince of all Philosophers, vppon the meaning of the Greeke woord it selfe, *μαντια μαντιν*, from whence our Prophetes drawe theyr name : is not ashamed to annex and linke all prophecie. *τι ἀφροσύνη ἀνθρώπων*, to mennes want of iudgement or discretion, and why so ? Marrie, sayth he, because we finde not of those, which haue ordinary exercise of their inward faculties and vse of reason : *ἐμπατρίαται μαντικῆς ἐνθεῶ καὶ ἀληθῆς*, to bee enfeoffed or inspired with this diuine and certayne kinde of prophecie : but eyther when the senses are restrayned by the bond of sleepe, or the spirites chafed with excesse of passion, or reason quite exiled from her seate by fury. In another place, he seekes to qualifie the generall reprofe of giddinesse and lyghtnesse in the brayne : because, if it had bene reputed woorthy of mislyke among our auncestours, they would neuer haue deriued *τις καλλίστη τέχνη ὑπὸ μάλλον ἀρίστη*, the most excellent and peerelesse arte, whereby we deeme of future things from so corrupt a fountayne, so that *Recta organi dispositio*, whereof Aristotle seemes to make so great account : may be taken to be altogether ydle in this matter.

This is that kinde of diuination, which Aristotle and Porphirie call *τῶν ἀφρονῶν*, Cicero, *Rationis expertem*, voide of reason : because, sayth Cassandra, the god (or the deuill rather) is no sooner,



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

Eurip. in  
Hecuba.

Theod. hist.  
lib. 4. cap. 21

(a)  
Euseb. lib. 5  
cap. 16.

(b)  
Histo. li. 14.  
(c)  
Hieron. in  
Abac. cap. 3.

(d)  
In Nahum.

(e)  
Dan. 10. 1.

(f)  
Ose 4. 14.

(g)  
Cicero de  
diuin. lib. 2.

(h)  
Psal. 2. 10.

entered into the man or woman : but a straunge effect enfewes , and what is that ? *λέγειν τὸ μέλλον τῷ οὐ μνηστικῷ πνεύματι*, hee causeth the distraught and phranticke person to tell thinges to come , that is, to propheticke . Of this kinde were the most parte of the truchemen , or slye pages which attended vpon Oracles , as appeareth by the stories of the Church . For the deuilles , which were cast out in the desert by Macarius that holie priest , would not giue aunswere nor declare their minde, by theyr interpretesse the priestes daughter . Priusquam eam in furorem compulissent , before they had driuen her into furie , and againe, we finde it vrged against Montanus, Maximilla and the rest , that they were not temperate and milde, as the ministers of the true G O D are and ought to be : but (a) *Vesano spiritu agitati* , styrrred vp with a phranticke spirite .

Such were the Germaine Ladyes, which as we reade in Tacitus , (b) *Per furorem turbatae adesse exitium canebant* : being distraught by furie, gaue foreknowledge of destruction at hande . *Qui* (c) *enim in ecstasi sunt, nec tacere nec loqui in sua pratem habent*, for they which are in a traunce, as saint Ierome writes, neyther haue it in their owne power what to conceale or vtter, but lyke a bagpype, that is blowne vp with a violent and sudden winde : Dant sine mente sonam, giue a sound without vnderstanding. In another place he writeth, that the warnings which were giuen by the Prophete Nahum, touching the great (d) preparation of the King of Syria : were not of a man that ranne in a traunce, lyke to those of Montanus, Prisca, Maximilla, and such lyke : but proceeded from a stedfast and assured iudgement , conseruing sensiblie, *Vniuersa quae loquebatur* , all thinges that he delyuered, according to that rule of Daniel , (e) *Intelligentia opus est in visione* , in discouering visions we haue neede of vnderstanding : otherwise, the Prophetes which are euer chatting without any certayne ground , may be compared to Parrettes, which are euer prating , but they knowe not what , or to the pie, that saluted Caesar by his name, but conceiued not the greatnesse of his place , nor the weight of his auctoritie : and therefore must be subiect to that censure of the Prophet Osee, (f) *Populus non intelligens, vapulabit* , the people which vnderstandeth not, shall be beaten .

Howe then should we followe them as guides and leaders , in the scruples of obscure and doubtfull sence, saith Cicero, (g) *Qui ex leuissimo & indoctissimo hominum genere constant*, which consist of the verie lightest and most vnlearned kinde of men : when the word of God requireth (h) knowledge in a Iudge , and Pindarus a Painim could discerne , *κουφώτερας τῶν ἀπειρατῶν φρονίας* , that the minde of menne, which were not seasoned by sound experience, was lyght and vnstable. If the blinde leade the blinde , both fall into the ditche together , and what

*of supposed prophecies.*

what grosser kinde of blindnesse can there bee : then to want their eye of common sence or witte, whereby we differre from the beasts, and are dyrected in the choise of good or euill . Neyther dooth it helpe the phrantike Prophetes any thing, that Dauid confesseth himselfe to haue beene scarred, In excessu mentis (i) sure , in a kinde of traunce or rauishing of sence : least God had turned his face from him, &c. for he meaneth only discouragemēt by sinne, not depriuation of his witte, although we make great difference betweene a spirituall astonishment, wherein bothe Eldras and the writer of the reuelation were founde : (which I conceyue to be none other, then a peremptorie sequestration for the tyme, from thoughtes and dealings of the world) and the madnesse of Apollos nouices, who thought themselues most able to discern of colours when they were starke blinde, most actiue when they stalked vppon stylyes, and most pregaunt in foretelling thinges to come, when they wanted witte or reason to deeme of the present . I knowe that Iosephs brethren called him (k) Somniatorem, a dreamer: but in spite and scorne, because God had reuealed more vnto the youngest. Achis called Dauid a(l)madde man : but himselfe was ouertaken by that stratageme. The ruffianes which attended vppon Iehu, thought the minister of Elizeus had beene scarred (m) out of his wittes : but he brought a message from the mouth of God . The Disciples tolde the (n) Damsell, that brought tydings of the safe escape of Peter, that she spake she knewe not what: but he iustified her ayme . Festus vpbayded saint Paule with madnesse : but he spake the wordes of trueth and sobrietie, and they which thought the ministers of God, in this lyfe had lost theyr reason, in respect of theyr simplicitie, and because they would not shrink for any storme, from the charge which they had vndertaken by the wyll of God : were after this lyfe forced and constrained to confesse theyr error after this sort, Nos insensati, vitam illorum æstemabamus insaniam, & finem sine honore, &c. We sencelesse fooles, esteemed theyr liues to be madnesse, and theyr ende voide of

(i)  
Psal. 31. 23.

(k)  
Gen. 37. 19.

(l)  
1. Reg. 21. 14.  
(m)

4. Reg. 9. 11.  
(n)  
Acts. 12. 15.  
Acts. 26. 25.

Sap. 5. 4. 5.

If any man of learned iudgement, or of single confidence in God alone, attempt to sound the depth of those vaine persons, whome by vulgar abuse our custome is to call wise men : he shall either finde the foorde so shallowe, as it cannot beare a vessell of full freight, or the Pilote



## A defensatiue against the payson

- Pilote so farre from the knowledge of a forraine coast, as he neyther vnderstandes his compasse, nor his facultie. Are these, *Sensus exercitati, ad discretionem boni et mali*, the practised and inured senses, to distinguish betweene good and bad, without which, it was not possible to discern the prophecies, as Sozomene reports, which were dispersed in his dayes by reason of theyr straunge obscuritie. Shall we suppose that any tender eye can gaze against the Sunne, which waters at the sight of Hesperus? But it is a world to see, what fables haue beene foyted in vnder the vizard of antiquitie, to grace the matter. For the first man that themselues confesse, to haue attayned to the skyll and credite of a Prophete in Tharsus: was a feelie shepheard, hauing onely so much witte, as taught him to take sound aduantage by the follies of his countrey men: a fitte author and inuentour of so vaine a facultie. I speake not this, to lincke or tye the grace of God in such a seruile manner, to the clogge of ordinary meanes: that he may not when it pleaseth him, select *τα μυστα τῆ ἀγορῆς*, the follies of the world, to confute the cunning practise of our common enimie: (for I knowe, that shepherds haue beene prompted and instructed from aboue, when all the Rabbies of the Sinagogue were driuen to blowe the seke) and that a sorte of Fishermen, inspyred by the father of all trueth, made both the Temple of Ierusalem to stoupe, and the glory of this world to melt: but I stand vpon this point, that the dayes being now expyred and blowne ouer long agoe, in which God promised to speake from betweene the Cherubines, he worketh, as I meane to prooue more fullye in another place, by meane and not by myracle.
- Moses himselfe, was no lesse expert in the misteries of Egypt to displaye theyr error: then furnished with extraordinarie gyftes for the setting forth of Gods glorie, and though Jeremy were chylidish at the first, and knewe not howe to speake, though the Prophete Amos were neyther a Prophete nor the sonne of a Prophete, but a simple heardman, Vellicans *sycōmoros*: yet after they were once *θεοῦ ἰδαντες* taught by God, the world went otherwise, for he that gaue them charge to prophecie to the house of Israel: both could and dyd enable them, with knowledge aunswerable to so great an office. We reade, that Christ, almost in his cradle, graueled the Doctours of the lawe, as Hercules is sayde to crush the Serpents, that would haue inuaded him whyle he was an infant: but the same Christ was no lesse perfect God then man, and his Disciples were annointed inwardly, before they tooke in hande to preach, which inward grace, I take to be the complete armour, wherewith both Steuen and Paule resisted all the stratagemes of carnall wits: which by the pleasing bayte of honour and entising hope, drew men to the nette of incredulitie. I would most gladly prosecute this poynt in theyr discredite and disgrace, which without knowledge eyther of the
- seede

*of supposed prophecies.*

seede or of the soyle: set hande to the plowe, and take vpon them with out eyther ordinary or extraordinary gyfts, to dispense the word of life, to preache and prophecy: but that the swelling of this treatise dryueth me to cutte of many thinges, which vpon better leysure were not vnfitte to be deliuered. By thys we learne, that all the prophets which were honored in the Church of God, eyther got theyr knowledge by inspiration onely, as Ieremy, Ezechiel &c. or by inspiration added, to deepe learning, by the rule and ordinary meane, as Moyse and S. Paule, whereof the first was brought vppe in the courte of Egypt, and instructed in all kynde of knowledge before hee tooke a charge: the second grounded in the letter of the Law, by the diligence of Gamaliell, before he were inspyred in hys iourney to Damasco: but neyther one nor other could be sayd to raue, as Apollos prophets did, and some others in like manner at thys day, for such a straunge excesse, were opposite vnto so rare a gyft as they would clayme by nature.

Porphirius [sayth Iamblichus] was of the minde, that passio was the cause of prophecie, which Paradoxe himselfe doth afterwarde impugne: because nothing is more firme and resolut the one, nothing more loose and tickle then an other. Againe, he taketh vppe those wryters very bitterly, which defined prophesy to be Exitum et alienationem, a goinge out or alienation of vnderstanding: and his reason is, because that signifies a falling out and declining to the worse, whereas it ought to be a raysing and restoring to the better. Furthermore, passion hath no meane to perce into the misteries of truth: but rather bringeth an impediment thereto; but aboue all, this rule of Iamblichus is to be obserued, Alienationem a causis factam corporis, esse animi deprauationem et ex debilitate contingere, that alienation caused by occasions and instruments of the body, proceedeth of weakenesse &c, Nam quæ fascinati imaginamur, præter imaginamenta nullam habent actionis aut essetia veritatem, For those things which we imagine while we are bewitched, haue none other truth eyther of action or substance, then meere fancie: and though madde men foretell some things that are true, it is by chaunce and not by property. We might as well beleue that men ouershot with cups, were able to prognosticate: because the spirits are refined and made subtile by the fumes of must, and as the prouerbes teache, In Vino veritas: but thys must be conceiued of excesse, which picketh all the lockes, and breaketh downe the barres of faithfull truste, not of any vertue that proceedeth from the Licor: for no Paracelsian durst euer take in hande, to straine wisdom out of Grapes, nor secretes out of surfette.

To that which is obiected out of Plato, and his disciple Cicero in like manner, that no man without a certaine Gadbee or diuine furie, could attaine to perfection in verse: I aunswer that a Poet & a prophet differ

K.j.

De Myster  
Ægypt.  
pag. 85,

Idem. pag.  
87,



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

In Phædro

Esay, 5, 20.

differ very much, and yet I neede not seeke out any difference in this respect, because he meaneth nothing but a certayne gallant life or spirite, whereby great mindes are stirred vppe and incited to take braue attempts and workes in hande, and though the terme of furie which those authors vse, may seeme some what harsh to some that are not well acquainted with the phrased: yet we must vnderstand it in that sense wherein Plato calleth loue *μανια*, and Aristotle termeth anger Breuem *furorem*, which notwithstanding by hys owne allowaunce, is *Cos Fortitudinis*, the whetstone of valoure and of magnanimitie. Whereupon I dare and will defende, in despite of this straunge Paradoxe (which beareth it selfe boldly vpon the credite of some graue Philosophers) that as nothing is more repugnaunt to skill then ignoraunce, to truth then falshode, to light then darkenesse, in respect whereof, the Prophet curseth those that mistake one for an other: so nothing can bee more opposite to discretion then distemper, to prophecy then furye, leauinge those light heades, to the smart and punishment of theyr owne grosse ouersight, which are so simple and so childish as to thinke, that rauing Cassandra coulde discerne more certainly in hir traunce, what shoulde happen to the state: then Priam by the indgement and conceite of hys wyfeste counsaillours.

There is no doubt, but the doctrine and discourse of traunces, where in the soule is in a sorte abstracted fro the body was deducted fro the schoole of Mahomet, and of Auicenne one of the chiefe Rabbies of his Synagoge, who writeth wonders about this poynte: to conceale and shaddowe the disgrace of theyr high Prophet, whom it pleased God to strike with the falling sicknesse, for a punishment of his most execrable blasphemies, against the onely sonne of the lyuing God and hys euerlasting kingdome. I coulde repeate the straunge attempte of that dizzie Damsell, whom diuers called the holy mayde of Kent, and of the greater part of Annabaptistes at thys day in Germanie, and of some other nerer hande, who finding themselues vtterly confounded, and theyr doctrine put to flight by the word of God, deuise these vailes and colours of abuse to deceiue theyr auditours. But of this more shalbe spoken, in a place no lesse conuenient and fitte for the purpose.

Dreames.

**C**Concerninge Dreames, whych is an other loope whereby the Prophets take their light: I needed not to speake or vtter much considering the very name of a dreame, giueth so playn a check to the profession of truth: were it not that sundry persons, of the wiser and more learned sorte, haue sauored in thys poynt a greate deale too much, of the rules and groundes of friuolous philosophye. For who is able to excuse theyr ouersight, which gyue no lesse credite vnto sleepe, then if it were an Oracle of trueth? belecue the spyrites which

### *of supposed prophecies.*

which were deieſted with proude Lucifer for pride, to flicker vp and downe lyke ſcoutes that watch for our defence, and to miſtake the ſhaddowes of the night, which laſt no longer then the print of our faces in a glaſſe, for the tables of diuine intelligence. O homo quo te confe- res, &c? O man, ſaith Bernard, whether wilt thou goe? When vnder eue- ry ſtone, which thou deuiſeſt to remooue by the ſtratagemes of thyne aspiring witte, ſleepes a Scorpion? But to remooue this obiect of deepe ſcandale and offence, out of the Kinges high waye, wherein both wiſe men and fooles muſt walke alyke, as the Sunne ſhineth both vpon the juſt and vniuſt, ſo long as they continew in this world: I finde no bet- ter meane, then by battering the bulwarkes of defence, which certaine learned men haue reared and erected in the fort of ſleepe, againſt the ſhotte of prouidence. Thus ſhall we certainlie driue Sathan, to giue vp one of his ſtrongeſt holdes, and warelie rebate that edge of errour: whereby the wicked ſecke to ſcrape the marke or ſeale out of our fore- heads, which was imprinted by the ſacrament of regeneration.

Fiſt therefore, to encounter with theyr greateſt patrone and protec- tour Plato, where he dealeth moſt dyrectlie in the cauſe: wee are to note, how many ſundrie circumſtances muſt concurre about a dreame, according to the rules of his owne preſcript, before we can aſſure our ſelues of any certaine truth by ſo lyght an image. For fiſt, the brutiſh part of man muſt ſleepe, whyle reaſon is moſt buſie at her worke. Then muſt the diet, which we take before our ſleepe, be tempered and quali- fied in ſo ſtraite a meane: as neyther it abound one ounce to tend vp fumes, nor want one dramme to diſable nature, and which is moſt hard of all: our phanſie muſt be *Tanquam raſa tabula*, and abſolutelie free from any print of the dayes imagination. Theſe circumſtaunces, ioig- ning and concurring in a kinde of hermonie: it is not vnpoſſible, ſayth the great Philoſopher, for the reaſonable part of man to diſcouer in adream, *ὁ μὲν οὖν δὲν ἢ πρὸς τῶν μεγιστοῦν ἢ ὀντων ἢ μέλλοντων*, ſecretes which hee neuer knewe before, eyther touching matters preſent, paſt or future, which maketh in effect no more for this purpoſe, then if he ſhould haue ſayde, that ſo long as men haue alterable bodies, and be- ſide, ſuch mindes as are no leſſe ſubiect to paſſion and diſtemper, then the ſeas are to winde and ſtorme: it is not poſſible for any, *Lumine naturali*, by the lyght of nature, to ſet downe ſo certayne or dyrect a rule, concerning thinges to come: but the ſame will fayle more often then it comes to paſſe, and procure to thoſe, that ſeeme to relye thereon, ten diſgraces for one fauour.

But ſuch was Platos partiality to man, as hauing made him *μικροκομον* a lyttle world within himſelfe, imagined his plotte to be diſgraced al- rogether, vnleſſe he would picke out a prouidence beſide the proui- dence of God: whereby the world, and all thinges in the ſame, are over-



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

ruled. By howe much neerer to the trueth drawes Aristotle, in setting downe this certayne ground, *Cognitionis modum, sequi modum rei cognoscentis*, that the limittes of our knowledge, must be correspondent to the strength of the thing which dooth conceyue: according to that warrant of the written word, *Corpus quod corumpitur aggrauat animam*, the body which is corruptible, maketh the soule heauy, &c. Saint Thomas reasons very subtilly about this poynt, and prooues, that since the reasonable soule of man hath his beeing, whyle hee lyueth in *Materia corporali*: so naturally it knowes and vnderstandes no more, then hath *Formam in materia*, vt pro huiusmodi cognosci possit, such a forme imprinted in the matter, as by the same it may be sensibly conceiued

Luk. 8. 52.

Matt 22. 32.

Aristotle de  
diuin. per.  
insom.

Another writer of that crew, condemneth all kindes of presuming and diuining vppon lyght of dreames, by this strong inference, that if sleepe were a meane to discouer and reueale thinges to come: then, by how much deeper and profounder the sleepes were, in respect the reasonable soule, should be further sequestred and estraunged from the sence: by so much should the dreames and things, discouered by them be more assured, but on the other side we finde by manifest examples, that more weighty matters haue beene reuealed in a slumber, then (as we call it) in dead sleepe: therefore cannot dreames be holden & accounted Oracles of Prophecie. And wheras some would make good & fortifie this argument, by supposing such a kinde of slumber, as neyther leaueth phantasien or vnderstanding in any strength of act: I wyll giue eare when they can yeeld and instance of any such, excepting our death, in which plight I take the Centurions daughter to haue beene, of whome our sauour Christ sayd in the Gospell: *Non mortua est, sed dormit*, she is not dead but sleepeth, & againe: *Non est Deus mortuorum sed viuorum*, he is not the God of the dead, but of the lyuing. Furthermore, to the knowledge of all thinges, eyther sensible or to be vnderstoode, two thinges are required; first, *Receptio rei cognite*, the receiuing of the thing which is knowne, and then, *Iudicium de recepta*, the iudgement thereof when it is receyued: wherevppon I gather, that albeit sequestration from the senses may be sayde, to fortifie our faculties in receiuing this straunge kinde of propheticall intelligence: yet it hynders our ability to iudge, because, sayth the Philosopher, it is not possible to iudge. *Nisi resolutione facta an consonet sensibilibus*. without making first a resolution, and, as it were, a comparison whether those conceites, agree with thinges subiect to the senses. Herevppon himselfe was forced to confesse, that it was a point about the pitch of our capacitie: to gesse or prophecie what should chaunce in tyme to come, to those that liue as farre hence as the pyllers of Hercules or Boristhenes.

His

*of supposed prophecies.*

His reasons against this kinde of diuining are these, first, it is not graunted to the wisest and best sort of men, but to the vulgare multitude: because their heades are lesse perplexed and distracted with great matters, which were, sayth he, against the maiestie of God. Secondlie, for that dreames happen not onelie vnto men, but vnto babes: as appeareth by their smyling in their sleep, and beside to beastes which are voyde of reason, and thirdly, becaule no certayne humour standes in phantasie, but howsoeuer it be bent, inclyned or disposed for the tyme, if any stronger fume aryse then that, from whence the lyght whereby we ought to iudge should haue taken his beame, Non sequetur id cuius erat significatio, that followes not which before was signified.

The scriptures teach, that the sleepe of those which keepe the lawes of God and lyue in his feare, shall be sweete: but no word of reuelation, so saith saint Gregorie, Cogitationes sanctiores delectabiliora sequuntur somnia, More delyghtfull dreames followe after holy thoughtes and cogitations: so Barnard wisheth all good men and women, to fall on sleepe with a sweete meditation, vppon the death and merites of Christ Iesus, that where they left, they may begin againe in the morning: but none of these went further then the peace of a good conscience.

Pro. 3. 34.

Grego. in Iob.

Ad frat. de monte.

The ground of all this confidence in dreamies, is a certayne supposition, that the soule of man is not immortall onelie: but in a sort let slippe out of the bosome of almighty G O D, and from the first beginning, prompted and inspyred with the knowledge of his holy wyll, which dreame, not onelie men of learning haue refuted by their workes: but our selues are able to controule by generall experience, for who sees not, howe long our humaine reason lurketh vnder vayles of ignorance, lyke fire in a flint? and bothe encreaseth and appayreth with the state and strength of the body. For if the body be the prison, and the senses manicles and fetters of the soule: howe comes it to passe that young infants, whose senses are lesse strong then ours, who sleepe much more then we, which are not ouertaken with the scouters of wanton and inordinate desires, and whose lines in puritie drawe neerer to the perfite rule, not onely vnderstand much lesse then wee: but in effect nothing. They that fauour dreames, are woont to presse vs sarnestlie, to declare a reason of the difference, why the soule should not as well prognosticate and propheticie, when the senses are shutte vp by sleepe: as blinde men haue the deepest and most perfite memories? Wherevnto I answer, that albeit men, whose inward senses are not drawne away by vanities obiected to the sight, according to that common prouerbe, Vis vnitafortior: may cause vs to retayne more stedfastly what wee haue heard, yet this prooues not, that we should ayme at matters which we neuer heard, and take vpon vs to discouer future mysteries, which neuer

K. iij.

came



### *A defensative againſt the poſſon*

came within the ſence : much leſſe in the phantaſie, and leaſt of all in our vnderſtanding . Cicero, to confirme the doctrine of his maſter Plato, caſteth once againe about to prooue, that the gods conferre moſt wyllinglie, Cum dormientibus, with men whyle they are in ſleepe : which I wyll not ſticke to graunt, ſo that it may be lykewiſe yeelded and confeſſed vnto mee, that thoſe verie gods of whome he ſpeaketh in that place, were Dæmonia deuilles, according to the ſentence of the Prophete . For as the ſoule is alienated or eſtraunged, eyther from the outward or the inward ſenſes, whyle it reſteth in the body . ſo by conſent of all Philoſophers, the firſt may proceede, A ſomno, a vehementi paſſione, ab occupatione mentis, a morbo, a dæmone, &c. from ſleepe, vehement paſſion, too great trauell and agitation of the minde, from ſickenefſe, and from the deuill : whome the Paynimes called, *Ναῦμα*, a ſpirite or familiar, &c. And if any man be ſo ſimple, as to ſeek for future knowledge by diſtemper of the minde in this degree (whoſe quiet hath beene alwaies rather taken for the ſeate of ſound conceit:) let him call to minde, that Aristotle compares the minde to water, which if you trouble once, cannot represent any certayne ſhape or ſimilitude of any thing, no more then a man that is pore blinde, can from a farre off diſcerne of colours.

Againſt this firſt it is obiected out of Aristotle, in the beginning of his treatiſe, De diuinatione per inſomnia : that he would haue men neither raſhlie to contemne, nor ſuperſtitiouslie to giue credite vnto dreames, a notable aucthority, as ſome will iudge, to prooue that there is a kinde of lyght by dreames : ſo that the ſame be taken as it ought, and not abuſed by temeritie . But no man is ſo fitte in verie deepe, to explicate the meaning of that place, as the Philoſopher himſelfe : who in that verie booke, and lykewiſe in his bookes De anima, declares that the beſt learned and moſt expert Phiſitions are of the minde, that heedfull obſeruation of ſuch dreames as happen to the ſicke, auayle verie much to the iudgement of theyr ſtate, and the finding of that humour which cauſeth theyr infirmitie. No man denies, but dreames giue warninges of the pride or weakenefſe, of all humours which infeſt the body (becauſe the ſmalleſt motions that nature can put foorth or offer, when the ſenſes are tyed vp, lyke the barking cares of Cholcer, are felt at eaſe) inſomuch as many in theyr ſleepe, ſayth Aristotle, finde that ſweetiſhe taſte of ſleame vpon theyr tongue, which no man feelles by daye, and if one knocke at the doore, we dreame of thunder, if one man playe, we take it for a full conſort of muſicke, &c. Whereas the motions, which happen and betyde vs in the day, muſt eyther be ſo violent, as almoſt are able to put downe the ſence, or elſe the faculties bothe outward and inward, are ſo diuerſely diſtracted and deuided, by the meane of obiectes entercurring too and fro, as it is moſt harde to ſettle

*of supposed prophecies.*

settle vpon any single poynt, or to iudge with certayntie. One dreaming on a tyme, that by mischaunce he slypped into a pytte of water, wherevpon foorthwith, the small of his legge was turned into whyte marble, deceased within a while after of a dropsie. Who sees not by this plaine example, that recourse of waterish humours to the weakest part, had made a certayne coldnesse and styfnesse in the place, which the party felt more easily in sleepe, for the reaso which I haue before declared. Another dreaming, that hee swame against a bloody streame: was cured of a plurisie. The third, that he appeared all in fire, lyke Hercules furens, vpo a stage: fel the very next day into a burning Ague.

It is reported furthermore by Diodorus Siculus, that a Scithian dreaming that the greates God of phisicke Æsculapins, had drawen the noysome humours of his body to one certaine place or heade: was constrained within a while, to lanch a festered and most dangerous impostume of most filthy matter, not that the dreames were causes of these maladies, but signes and tokens of the poyson; which began to mooue and stirre within the vaynes, and would appare the parties health, if it were not preuented in good tyme with conuenient order and aduise of learning. No man can account all these thinges meere future, which appere to men of skill by the fluxe of humors, and therefore thus muste Aristotle be rightly vnderstoode, where he seemeth to defende the probabilities of dreames, so farre as men esteeme them signes of humours, or distempers wrought by nature in the body, howsoeuer diuers nowe a dayes eyther vpon contempt or scrupolositie, giue small regarde, for otherwise the text of the Philosophir is cleere and euident inough, where he setteth downe this rule or principle to be considered of all; Nullam causam consentanam cernere qua eueniat, id denique facit vt nulla eius sit autoritas, to see no likely reason, why the thinges which are prognosticated in this manner should come to passe: is in effect as much, as if we should acknowledge that they are of no weight or authority. I meruaile that none of the defenders of the trueth of dreames, alledge that passage, wherein melancholye men are called by the same philosopher *αὐθυμώτοι*, not because theyr dreames are more certaine then the reste: but because theyr dayly meditations are more generall, more firme & durable, and lesse subiect to the fumes of fancy. Foreuen as Gamsters, which contende together often times, at length obtaine the price, and there is no man, sayth Cicero, Qui toto die iaculans, aliquando non collimet, which beating the marke all the day, striketh not the clowte sometime: so falles it out, that melancholie mindes, Quod multis variisque motibus agitantur rerum futurarum euentus conijciunt et assequuntur, because they are tossed and perplexed with many and dyuers motions, they coniecture much, and thereby light happily sometimes vpon the gesse of a thyng future.

De deuī  
per Infam.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

I vouch the very text of Aristotle himselfe, the rather to deprive them of theyr greatest countenance, which in despite of learning and true knowledge, wrest the iudgement of theyr author to the defence of theyr follye: others that wade deeper in this Poole, attempt to fortifie the credite of the Paradoxe, by fayning and supposing, that it was the purpose and the prouidence of God, to breede so streight affinitye and kyndred betweene one thinge and an other, from the first beginninge of the worlde: as by perfecte knowledge of the qualities and nature of the simples, men might gyue a gesse at thinges to come, as tuned in one key, and one aunsweryng an other with one kynd of harmonie. But who can lende his eares to such vaine tales, as carry colloure without weicht, and sounde without substaunce.

To dreame of the yolke of an egge importeth golde, if you lyst to beleue Artemidorus: and why so rather then a Chicken, wherevnto that yolke by course of kynd should haue beene changed? Why should dreames of water portende troubles? if theyr reason be, because that element is moste subiecte of all other to the wynde: it shoulde rather bringe goodlucke, because we see, that the most happy fortunes of this lyfe, lye most open to the stroke of emulation. I could say the lyke of falling of the salte, meeting with a deade corpe in a morning, dreaming of fyer, losse of teeth, of drowning, swinging in the ayre, walking in a clowde, with a thousand more, which for a time encomber and disturbe the phantasie with feare: but haue no more coherence or affinitye by nature with those straunge effectes, which are ascribed to them by the vulgare sorte: then Germanes lippes that mette not by a fadome. For neyther God himselfe gaue any light of this streight lincke, when he created both the worlde and vs: nor experience by tracte of tyme hath founde it out, nor knowledge of the simples by long studie, hath reuealed it, nor Paracelsus by the distillatiō of his Limebecke hath approoued it.

Gen. 40, 12. I knowe that some take great aduantage for the prooffe of this conceite, vppon the wordes of Ioseph to the Butler, when he tooke in hande to expounde his dreame. Tres propagines tres adhuc dies sunt, By three branches are signified three dayes, as if these simples hadde a kinde of kindred or consent betweene them selues: but there is no question, but the same God which inspyred Ioseph with the gyft of interpretation, as appeareth by that sentence, Nun quid non dei est interpretatio, cometh not interpretation from God: conueied the dreame into the Butlers heade likewise, as a ready meane to rayse and to aduance the credite of his minister, and therefore it were vayne to leuel groundes of nature by the gift of grace, or to make the priuiledge of some one particuler, a dispensatiō for the craft of many. So many as are fearefull with S Paule, to wade more deeply in the Poole of prouidence, then they finde the groundes

*of supposed prophecies.*

groundes of vnderstandinge firme and stedfaste vnder foote: may not these reasons culled out of learned wryters, for confining dreames to that precinct, which eyther nature in her order doth appoynt, or God by warraunt hath established.

Fyrst therefore we may gather by the slighte forgetting of our dreames, that theyr print is shallowe. Secondly, no man of iudgement will make choise of fancie for his guide, rather then aduise and mature deliberation. Thyrdly, if we take delight in allegories, about this point, the Poets write, that Apollos robe (whom they repute the Prince of prophetic) was made of purple, with a glosse, not of puke with a shaddowe. Fourthlie, whereas the gods reueale theyr mysteries to those, that are most godly, sober and discrete: experience dooth teach, that none dreame more then they that are vnstaide, and furthest bothe from rules of vertue, and of moderation. Fiftlie, it is not lyke, that God, who is more pure then puritie it selfe, will make our dreames the shaddowes of his ordinarie grace, or put on a maske that hath beene, is, and euer shall be, steyned with so many sinfull accidentes. Sixtly, we maye not thinke, that God would giue so fayre a colour, whereby men might be induced rather to depend vppon the pride of nature which is frayle: then vpon the rule of prouidence which is vnstable. Seuenthly, we must be diligent in weeding vp the causes of debate & strife within the Church, as diuersity in dreames, which would neuer haue an ende, if it were free, for euerie prating iacke to controwle the magistrate, vppon pretence of reuelation: which falleth out at this daye in the publike schooles, and conuenticles of the wicked Annabaptists. Non enim dissentionis auctor est Deus, sed pacis, For God is not the auctor of dissencion and strife, but of peace and vnitie. Eyghtly we see, that whereas God is truth, & inspireth men with no kind of intelligence, sauing such as is in all points aunswerable to the glorie of himselfe: the phantasies of sleepe withdrawe mens mindes, not onlie from the course of duety, but from the rule of vertue. Ninthly, we scorne discouery by dreames, because there is no directorie rule of distinguishing, between the certayne and the friuolous. Tenthlie, because God hath euer had, more apt and able meanes of discouering his holy wyll, then by breathing on the bolster, as the stall-fedde Epicure was woont to speake in scorne, or attending in the cabinette, we cannot value them in generall for groundes of truth, without detracting from the sacred maiestie. And last of all, it were a wilfull ouersight to measure truth by the lyne of imagination. When Lotte was so farre overcome, with the fumes of wyne and sleepe together, as hee coulde not discerne the lawlesse enterpryse of his deceyued daughters: I maruell where that Intellectus semper agens was, whereof Philosophers discourse so much? Or where was that diuinitie Rationalis animæ, which vnderstandes it selfe, and is neuer

1. Cor. 14. 33

Gen. 19. 30.

L.j.

voyde



## *A defensatiue against the posson*

- voyde of grace and lyght : if we beleue olde tales to discouer miste-  
 ryes. Againe, when Ioby slepte, why did he not foresee the daun-  
 ger of the swallowes doing, which bereft him of his eye sight. The  
 Math. 13. 25. malignaunt man, and wylie Serpent Sathan, scattered his tares among  
 the corne in the night : and while the weeders were at rest. The wolfe  
 attendeth tyll the sheepearde fall to sleepe, and for slouth beginne to  
 folde his armes togither. Darknesse hath alwayes beene the deuilles  
 mask, in which respect, the sacred Scriptures attribute the regiment  
 thereof to him: for as Cassandra noteth fitlie in Euripides *iv' opvov d'paxivue*  
*μίζα σives?* A theefe is alwaies strongest and most hardy in the twilight.  
 We were commaunded not to sleepe, in hope that God would open in  
 a dreame, what he concealeth in a clowd : but to watch & pray, least we  
 might be surprised on a sudden. And Christ rebuketh his Disciples, for  
 Mar. 14. 37. theyr drowsinesse before his death, which it is not like he would haue  
 doon at such a time, if sleepe had been reputed for so sound an Oracle.  
 Moreouer it is to be presumed, that if any lyght or ayme were to be  
 taken by dreames, there should be one or other so expert by study and  
 great dilligence, in giuing the true sense and meaning of the same, that  
 men could not erre: but our owne experience, adioyned to the ma-  
 nifest examples of Pharaio, who sawe a dreame, Cum nemo esset qui  
 edisseret, when no man was able to interpret it, of Baltazar, Nabucho-  
 Gene. 41. 15. donozer, Herode, &c. teacheth vs, that cyther we must construe by the  
 gesses of our owne conceyt or grope & blüder in the dark, therefore we  
 deny, that any lyght is to be taken by this meane or instrumēt. I know  
 that Pharaos butler, called dreames *Præfagia futurorum*, prognostica-  
 Gen. 41. 12. tions of things to come, but remember that he was bewitched with the  
 forcerers of Egypt. An Infidell or Pagan dreamed, that all the Tents of  
 Iud. 7. 13. Madian were beaten flat to the ground with a barlie loafe, & his fellow  
 tolde him, that hereby was vnderstoode the swoord of Gedeon, &c. But  
 by what analogie betweene a loafe and a paulion : sauing that it was  
 the wyll of God, to daill and affright them with this heauie syght,  
 to giue them lyght in this case to theyr owne confusion, and to dyrect  
 his seruant Gedeon of set purpose thither, to receiue encouragement &  
 hart by the shrinking of his enemies, so that our interpretors, can deriue  
 no warrant frō a president of extraordinarie grace, for the mayntenance  
 and firme support of supposed Oracles. Trogus & Iustinian thinke, that  
 Ioseph when he dwelt in Egypt, was instructed in the arte of expoun-  
 ding dreames, but since we finde that he declared what the rest could  
 not attaine, it prooues his knowledge not to come by rule, but by reue-  
 lation. For no man knowes the Father saue the Sōne, nor the Sōne saue  
 the Father, & to whome the Father hath reuealed it. And therefore they  
 were condemned in the councell of Vienna, who thought themselues  
 able to behold the maiestie of God, *Lumine naturali*, by the lyght of  
 nature.

*of supposed prophecies.*

nature. Ammonius an olde Philosopher, was of the minde, as Plutarcke writes, that after once the soule was happilie discharged, from the weightie clogge of sinfull fleshe, it might discerne the beauty of it selfe, but not so long as it were plunged in a flood of humours, and not onely borrowed and deriued shaddowes from the sense, but reteyned in it selfe, the print or stampe of outward fourmes which it had receyued. For these cleare beames of which he treateth, must extend and spreade themselues beyond the reach of any misty clowde, and not be lymitted, confined or restrayned to the formall object, wherevpon the senses houer. *Affectus enim & perturbationes, &c.* For well maye wee moderate and brydle, the lawlesse and vntamed passions of our minde, sayth saint Hierome, while we dwell in this tabernacle of earth: but we cannot altogither cutte them off, for whatsoeuer was inflicted by the fall of Adam as a punishment of sinne, remayneth, as saint Augustine writes, since our delyueraunce from hell by the merites of the second Adam, as an exercise of vertue, according to that rule of Paule, *Virtus in infirmitate perfecitur, Vertue is made perfect, and as it were, 2. Cor. 12. 9.* full summed in infirmitie: and where there is no strife, can be no conquest. O quories ego ipse, &c. O how often hath it chaunced to my selfe, sayth saint Hierome, lyuing in the wyldernesse beside all hauntes of wanton games, beeing parched with the raging beames of the Sunne, Hierom. ad rather giuing an edge then full satisfaction to hunger, with drie rootes, Demet. drincking no kinde of licqour, but colde water from the fountayne, waxing pale with abstinence, and so often as sleepe ouertooke mee, spreading my weake and wearie bones vpon the bare and naked ground, &c. How often hath it chaunced vnto me, sayth he, notwithstanding all these ordinarie meanes to brydle & repress the pride of flesh, *Vt mens æstualet in frigido corpore*, that appetite beganne to rage in my colde and wasted body, according to that text of Paule, *Videolegemaliam in membris meis, &c.* I see another lawe in my members, re- Rom. 7. 23. pugning against the lawe of my minde, and againe, *Non quod volo bonum, sed quod nolo malum facio*, I do not that good which I would, but that euyl which I would not, &c. Therefore I my selfe with the minde, serue the lawe of God, but with my flesh, the lawe of sinne, &c. And albeit happily the outward man were mortified, sayth Hierome: yet the sparkes of lust and appetite, began to kindle and reuiue in such a raging sort, as I could finde no remedy but by shedding a mayne flood of teares, and dayly bearing on my breast with praiers vnto God, the searcher of mans heart and reynes, tyll at the length my God rebuking all the stormie windes, and byllowes of concupiscence, a milde and quiet calme returned.

Now let vs gesse, how daungerously the sandy buildings of our vnperfect workes are, lyke to be shaken in this lyfe, and how vnlyke it is,

Lij.

that



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

that heauenly wisdom should lodge or harbor in our wanton minds, when blessed Ierome, who scant lefte any matter wherevpon concupiscence might feede, was not free from the batterie. Might it not seeme verie straunge, that men should buyld vpon the shaddowes of a dreame, which eyther leaues no print at all, or such a one, as remaynes no longer then that of an arrowe in the ayre, of a Whale vpon a quicke sand, or of a ship in the water, when our waking cogitations are so diuerse slight and mutable, as almost euery moment representeth a newe lyking. Besydes, we cannot reade that euer any man of witte or iudgement, durst attempt to set vp the rest of any famous enterprise, vpon the resolutiō of a dreame: which prooues that it neither carries weight nor certaintie. For God would not haue his discoueries set foorth, with a pensil of pretence in a ground of fancie: but ingrauen in tables of white marble with a point of diamond.

Againe, though some things should fall out, according to the light which we desery by dreames: who can determine, that this knowledge rather comes by natieue or inspyred vertue then by chaunce? or if by vertue, yet since our bad angell, is more often busie with vs in a dream then our good, as appeareth by the manifold illusions, which deceiue vs mightely in our sleepe (sometimes causing hope without rewarde, and sometimes feare without offence) who can deliuer any certaine note or marke, whereby we may be sure at all times to distinguish one from an other? For Sathan can transfigure himselfe into the figure of an angell. Beside, theyr ambiguitie is such, as I belecue wyth Cicero: this gyft to bee but *Hominum acumen coniecturas huc atque illuc ducentium*, the pregaunt quicknesse and sharpnesse of mennes wittes, applying, shifting and transposing theyr coniectures off and on, vpon the least resemblance or similitude. For prooffe heereof, it shall not be beside the purpose, to examine certaine of the rarest and most probable that are recorded in the stories.

2. Cor. II, 14

Two men that should contende in gaming at Olympus, dreamed, as it fell out, in one instant: that they were drawn by four swifte coursers in a Chariot: whereupon, they both repayred to a Prophet of their owne acquaintaunce, for some light before hand, what their lucke should be in tryall of the wager. The Prophet craftely considering, that euen as of two contradictory propositions, it is not possible that both should be true, no more was it that both these runners should haue good successe: thought best to make his profite of them both, by the cunning of hys owne deuise and slye shift in aunswering, till prooffe might affoorde him so much credite by the gayne of one, as disgrace by the dammage of an other. To the first therefore he gaue great encouragemēt, to hope and comfort that he should preuaile: because foure horses, representing in a figure the Teame of Phæbus, could not but import assured victory.

The

*of supposed prophecies.*

The second he discouraged with feare, because albeit foure horses ran before yet himselfe was last of all, which imported that he should bee caste behynde, and forgoe the wager.

One tolde Vitellius, that the circles which appeared in a runninge streame like crownes, were abodes of Empire, others put in a counterplea, that because those circles rose in water, which by nature is vnsteddy and vnſure: eyther thys good fortune shoulde not chaunce at all, or though it did, yet should it not be durable. One dreaming ouer night before he should runne at Olympus, that he was an Eagle, mette wyth one interpreter, who concluded heerevpon: that because an Eagle was the Prince and leader of all byrdes, he should preuaile, an other, tooke not so great holde vpon the qualitee and kynde of the birde, which shewes a corage to attempt, as of his place in cōming after all the flock: which declares a kynde of heauy mettle with want of agilitie. A certayne woman very desirous to bring foorth a chylde, dreamed in a night that her wombe was sealed by the gods, wherevpon, as one affrighted verrie sore with this heauy signe, she repayred to the Prophets for theyr opinions in the matter. Some held, that by the seale, a secrete let, impediment & barre in nature was emplied, so that it was not possible for her to conceiue, but other Doctors were of the minde, that she had conceived, & was sped already before the dreame, because the maner is not to make store of a shadow, nor to seale any thing that is voyd or emptye.

Hamilcar at the siede of Syracuse dreamed, that the next night after he should suppe within the towne, as in verie deed he dyd: though, not as a Prince, which he beleued, but as a prisoner, which was furthest from his imagination. In lyke sort, Anniball, before the breach of league and ouerture of warre with Rome, supposed in his sleepe, that in a generall assemblie of all the gods (whereat himselfe was present as he thought) one was appointed by the rest to guide him in this enterpryse, which emptye shadow breathed so great sprite & corage into the man: as he neuer ceased to picke quarrelles, and to nourish hatred betweene those states, tyll God, who is the soundest and sincerest iudge of equitie, depriued him bothe of lyfe and honour, and therefore was it well sayde by Salomon: *Sicut earbones ad prunas & ligna ad ignem, fit homo iracundus suscitatur rixas.* A certayne man called Eudemus, beeing warranted by diuerse of the best expositours of dreames, during the tyme of his exile, that after fye yeeres he should returne home to his natiue soyle with great honour, dyed at the fye yeeres ende in Syracuse, wherewith the Doctours beeing greatlie mooued and amated on the suddaine, could deuise no better shifte to ridde themselves out of this brake, and with all to support the credite of theyr facultie, then by distinguishing betweene the manner of returns: for as well may they be sayde, *Redire ad terram propriam*, which resolue into dust and ashes,

Pro. 26. 21.



### *A defensatime againſt the poſſon*

from whence all fleſh dooth come by courſe of kinde : as they that are reſtored to theiꝝ natiue countrey, *Vt enim mens cuiusque is eſt quiſque*, for as the minde of euery man is, ſuch is himſelfe, and as for this clotte of earth, which we reueſt ſo carefully, with the colours and diſguiſed plumes of pride: it hath doone dooth and euer ſhall, reſolue to nothing. A cittizen of Rome, at ſuch time as that pollicie was at the cheefeſt height, eyther dreamed in deede, or rather faigned as I thinke to dreame, that vneſſe the walles of the cittie were repayred with ſome dilligence, the Towne would be brought ere it were long into great icopardy, and no maruell, ſince the walles of any Towne of warre are eſteemed as the ſtrongeſt garde, and Rome wanted not great enemies, which were bothe vigilant & deſirous to ſpit lyght at a narrow loope & to make their profit of their neighbors negligence. Wherefore I cannot otherwiſe conceiue, but that ſome cunning fellow, finding the magiſtrates to careleſſe of the publike ſtate, & too much addicted to their priuate gaine, vnder the maſke of a dreaming Oracle, gaue warning to the councell, of theiꝝ careleſſe ouerſight in matters of moſt moment. Againe, who dare giue aſſured truſt or faith to dreames, when they that eyther value or eſteeme them beſt, or take vpon them to be ſharpeſt, in expounding their moſt intricate and darke conceites, are glad to drawe their geſſes, not from the ſignes themſelues, but from their contraries, as if a man would take blacke for white, or learne the way to Barwicke by counting the myles to Douer? For though the ſtriateſt rule be *Indix obliqui*, as Philoſophers doo teach, it is by meaſure and relation, not by forewarning or diſcouery, for God vſeth not to reueale his ſecrete purpoſes in ſo ſtraunge a maner. It is no parcell of his meaning, that whereſoeuer any of his Prophets warrant and affirme, we ſhould cauill and denie, for this engine were able of it ſelfe alone, to ſhake the frame of all the Scriptures. It is certayne, that the Prophetes ſet this ſcreene to ſhadowe their abſurde & wilfull lyes, for if the thing it ſelfe, in ſuch ſort as it is affirmed, take effect: then dreames muſt be reputed Oracles; in reſpect of theiꝝ owne welght, if not the thing it ſelfe, but the direct and expreſſe contrarie thereof chaunce to comē to paſſe, dreames notwithstanding, muſt be holden & beleued to be true by obſeruation, ſo that by what glade, or to what thicke ſoeuer the fooliſhe woodcockes take theiꝝ flight: the deuill hath eyther a cock ſhoote ready, or a ſprindge, or a bowe to meeete with them. Laſt of all, it is moſt euident to all men that take holde or ayme by dreames, that for the moſt part, eyther they ſlowe from the nightes diſtemper, or the dayes imagination. For as we ſee, that barges which are forced by the ſtrength of oares, haue a kinde of gate or ſwing when the ſtroke dooth ceaſe: ſo mindes, which are ſore laboured and tyred with deuife and trauerſe of the brayne by day, receiue a certayne ſtampe and deepe impreſſion therof, which is preſented

ted, Per vim intellectus, by the force of vnderstanding in a slumber, and as it is not in all poyntes the same, because the phantasie wyll haue a flourish in those matters vpon which it taketh holde: so, notwithstanding it awayleth not one iote the lesse, but sometyme by chaunce the more, to the finding out of truth, because the reasons wherevpon we settle and resolute, at the tyme of our committing of our selues to rest: are in the morning as they were, and whatsoeuer ryseth in the meane tyme by surcharge, discourse or agitation of the brayne, maye be taken or refused when we wake agayne, so farre as eyther it dissenteth or accordeth with the grounds of reason.

Thus Pylats wife was tormeted in her sleepe, by reason of her musing Math. 27. 19. and reuoluing in the day time (as some gather) with her self, how greuouslie the plagues of GOD would lyght vpon her husband and her house, for giuing sentence against that holy Lambe, who in respect himselfe, was altogether voyde and free from sinne, was fittest of all other to be offered, as a full, sufficient and most acceptable sacrifice for the sinnes of all the world, not of the Iewes onelie. I am not ignorant, that others deriue this dreame of Pylates wife, from an inspiration of God, &c. Against which sense, although my meaning bee not to repugne or strue, because it may be taken diuersely without offence, yet for mine owne part, I choose rather to arrayne her at the barre of nature in this case, by lyght whereof shee discovered the sinceritie of Christ, then to agnise her as a vessell, or an instrument of extraordinarie grace, considering, for any thing I reade, shee was no member of the Church, nor accounted of in any sort among the godly. Beside, the verie phrase it selfe, whereby the matter is expressed in Saint Matthew, *πολλὰ ἂν ἔπαθον σήμερον* &c. I haue suffered many thinges this daye in my sleepe for him, emplyes a kinde of relation, *Ad passiuum intellectum*, which consisteth as we knowe, *In meris naturalibus*. But as I sayde, I wyll not stande vpon the tearme, because bothe senses may be warranted by reason, and according to that warning of the Prophet: *In cubilibus vestris compungimini*. In lyke sorte, that wicked Iezabel, Domineca, the wife of Valens, dreamed, that God tooke away her onely sonne in the state of infancie, for a punishment of her despightfull dealing against saint Basil, that good Bishoppe and most holie confessor. Iosephus writes, that after Herode had vniustly made away his wife Mariamme (whose tytle was much better to the regiment of Palestine in verie deede, then his) she seemed euery night to trouble and wake him out of sleepe, so great is the feare and horroure of a bleeding conscience.

I knew my selfe a man, & so did diuerse other liuing at this day, which wyll auow the matter to be true, who hauing been a wicked and suborned instrument, to bring an innocent, a noble & a loouing master to his ende,

Psal. 4. 5.

Socrat. hist. lib. 4. ca. 21.

Ioseph. Antiquit. Iud.



## *A defensatine against the poyson*

ende: repayred to a sonne of his, more then twenty yeeres after, for pardon of this fault, alleading, that the father of that person his olde maister, pinched and tormented him by night in such a wrekefull sort, as he could take no rest nor ease at any tyme. The partie besought God to pardon him, adioining onely this aduise in charitie, that he would seeke by counsell of some good learned man, to shake the fornace of a guiltie conscience, which sent vp these frightes and fumes of melancholy fancies to his head, for as the soule of him whome he accused wrongfully, was in the hand of G O D, and free from all distempers or displeasures that belong to flesh: so God reserued store of mercy for repentaunt mindes, and would not turne his face from any sinner, that beleeuing with a constaunt and assured hope to be both heard and eased, in the name and by the merites of his onely sonne, repayred to the throne of mercy. No man can deny but this aduise was good, and such as might haue called home a wastfull childe, that were not too farre spent and past all grace, but as the stayne of bloud wyll neuer out of lawne: so doubtlesse that guiltie spirite, which enforced Caine to rore out after he had murdered his brother Abell, Maior est iniquitas mea, &c. Mine iniquitie is greater then it may be, pardoned: that draue Lamech to cōfesse, that he had slaine a man, but in *Vulnus suum*, to the wounding of himselfe, that vrged Iudas to acknowledge, the due punishment of betraying guiltlesse bloud, bereft this wicked caytife likewise of his wittes, in which vnfortunate and heauie plight, I am enfourmed credibly, that he deceased. Wherevpon we may gather, that though God be mercifull and slowe to punish, wayting and attending daylie for amendment of our liues: yet is he iust in plucking vp the rootes of falsehood and iniquitie.

Gen. 4. 13. Gen. 4. 23. Matt. 27. 4.

I neede not blotte my paper with confuting theyr conceytes, which thinke, that Angelles and spirites in our sleepe, suggest a certayne kinde of knowledge touching thinges to come: as Socrates his *δαιμων*, is sayde, to haue delyuered great warninges of the perilles which befell him afterwarde. These are but vayles of misbeleefe, and shaddowes of hypocrisie: for eyther this intelligence comes from our good Angell, as they call him, or our bad, If from the good, it is a reuelation by the sufferance and wyll of God: and therefore not to be comprised within limittes of an ordinary dreame, If from the bad, a dangerous illusion to bewitch our soules, and therefore to be slunned as the bayte of a deuouring enimie. The blessed Angelles are *δαιμονια πνευματα*, ministering spirites, or spirites sent to minister for them, which shall receiue the inheritaunce of saluation: and no further priuie to the secrete purposes of G O D, as appeareth by the bookes of Esdras: then it pleaseth him to reueale by fauour. But touching this, I wishe the Reader to observe what shall be noted and discoursed heereafter, when I come to the

Heb. I. 14.

poynt

*of supposed prophecies.*

poyn of diuining by familiars. In the meane time we may learne, that since neyther any dreame bringeth one and the selfe same effecte to diuerse personnes, that are different in qualitie, as appeareth by the difference, which Chalcas in Homer, putteth betweene the dreame of Agamemnon and a priuate personne (though the scriptures set downe none at all betweene Pharao and Ioseph) nor to the selfe-same personnes at all tymes, if theyr qualities or humours be distempered: it might bee taken for a verie grosse and sencelesse ouersight, to iustifie the follyes of a number by perticular euentes of some, for Plutarch himselfe, one of the best Philosophers of the Pagan schoole, cannot deny, *Sensus falli animam somniare*, That the soule it selfe dooth dreame, by reason of the fleshly tabernacle wherein it dwelles, and that the senses are deceyued. Fayne would we creepe into the prouidence of GOD, by stratagemes of witte, but it will not be, for the boundes and limittes of mans possibilitie, were set before his substance were created. And albeit all expositours of dreames abuse, yet is it truly found by Cicero: *Non tantam esse illorum infelicitatem, &c.* That theyr lucke is not so badde, but that sometyme the thing which they prognosticate falles out by chaunce, which may suffice to dasell bleared eyes, regarding one-lie *το φαν*, the word, not the prooffe, the fortune, not the reason. Note therefore, fyrst, that GOD forbyddeth vs. Audire (a) verba prophetarum aut somniatoris: to lysten to the wordes of a Prophete or a dreamer: whose trade was euer odious among the true professours of religion, as appeareth by the scornfull kinde of speech, which (b) Iosephs brethren vsed at his fyrst comming into the field, *Ecce somniator venit*, behold the dreamer commeth: albeit God wrought orherwise in him, then in our interpretors of dreames, which made olde (c) Iacob secretlie to muse and pause vpon the matter. Secondly, that the Preacher (d) marshalleth and placeth dreames, *Inter malefacientium vanitates*, among the vanities of euill doers, and if any man require a reason why they should be counted vanities, let the Prophete Esaie resolue him in this matter, for a man that is hungrie, dreames and eates, sayth he, *Cum (e) autem expergefactus fuerit vacua est anima eius*, but when hee wakes againe, his soule remaynes vsatisfiied. Wherevnto we maye lykewise referre that passage of the Psalme, (f) *Dormierunt somnum viri diuitiarum*, & *nihil inuenerunt in manibus suis*, the menne of ryches slept theyr sleepe, and found nothing in theyr handes, &c. Therefore hearken not vnto your dreamers, sayth (g) Ieremy, which warrant you from bondage vnder the King of Babilon: and why shall we not so much as heare them? *Quia mendacum prophetant vobis, vt longe vos faciant a terra vestra, & eiciant vos & pereatis*: because they prophecie nothing else to you but lyes, that they may driue you farre from your owne lande, and cast you foorth to perishe. He gyrdeth at them in ano-

M.i.

ther

(a) Deut. 13. 3.

(b) Gen. 37. 19.

(c) Gen. 37. 11.

(d) Eccle. 34. 34 1234

(e) Esai. 29. 8.

(f) Psal. 75. 9.

(g) Iere. 27. 6.



## *A defensatiue against the poison*

- (h) ther place, which cryed out (h) *Somniaui, somniaui*, which is confirmed  
 Iere. 23. 25. lyke wise by the obseruation of the Prophete Zacharie, *Somniatores lo-  
 quutos esse* (i) frustra, & vane consolatos esse, that the dreamers bothe  
 spake to no purpose, and delyuered vaine comfortes to theyr creditours.  
 (i) Zach. 10. 2. Againe, let him that hath a dreame, sayth Ieremie, recount a dreame,  
 and him that hath my word delyuer it: (k) *Quid paleis ad triticum?*  
 (k) Iere. 23. 28. What hath chaffe to doo with perfect and pure wheate? Which oppo-  
 sition of dreames against the woord of God, Ex professo & diametro,  
 emplies no lesse: then that bothe cannot accorde and agree together,  
 for marke by howe much we are richer after starting out of a golden  
 dreame, by so much are we wiser and more prouident, by shaddowes  
 represented in a slumber. We may be sure, that GOD would neuer  
 haue forbidden dreames in these flatte wordes, *Non obseruabitis som-  
 nia*: if there had beene any such foresight by them, as standeth vs vpon  
 to prooue, before we begin to practise. Wherefore, although the vyle  
 Messalian heretikes, gaue themselves wholie to slouth and ydlenesse, as  
 (l) Theodoret reportes: *Ipsa somniorum visa prophetias nominantes*,  
 tearing the verie shaddowes and images of dreames, by the name of  
 Theod. hist. prophecies, Though the priests of Lacedemon, had an vse (m) to com-  
 mitte themselves to rest in the temple of Pasithea, when they were de-  
 sirous to discouer thinges to come: yet since we finde that not onelie  
 (m) Leuit. 19. 6. (n) scriptures for our assuraunce, as I sayde before, but positue and ci-  
 uill lawes for common order and tranquillitie, haue set a punishment  
 C. de Mulef. by death vppon theyr heads, which professe the knowledge of expoun-  
 et Matth. ding dreames, since we finde the fruites more bitter then *Colliquinti-  
 da*, beside the follies & abuses which are infinite, the surest course is, not  
 to value flitting shaddowes more then reason would, which come with  
 a slumber, and depart with a fancie. The parents which ingender them,  
 are vnstable thoughts, theyr nurce ydlenesse, theyr pasture vaine desire,  
 theyr scope disorder, theyr interpretor presumption, theyr reward emp-  
 tineesse, theyr light vneertainie: and generally to conclude with saint  
 Ambrose, *Initium sine prudentia, finis cum poenitentia*, Theyr begin-  
 ning without discretion, and theyr ende with repentaunce.  
 I doubt not but some diligent collectour in these matters, wyll ob-  
 iect the dreames of Ioseph, Pharaon, Nabuchodonozor, &c. Which are  
 esteemed in the word of God as Oracles: wherevnto mine answer is,  
 Num 12. 6. that though we should affoord a greater credite to the dreames of that  
 age, wherein we were assured from the mouth of God himselfe, that he  
 would reueale his secrete purposes by dreame: it maketh nothing for  
 the wylfull blindnesse of this tyme, wherein we holde, as saint Peter  
 sayes, *Firmiorem sermonem propheticum*, &c. the propheticall word  
 1. Pet 1. 19. more sure in attending, wherevnto we doo well, as to a candle shining  
 in a darke place, vntyll the day drawe nie, and the day starre aryse in our  
 hearts,

*of supposed prophecies.*

hearts, &c. The Fathers were all vnder the (o) clowde, our tabernacle is in the (p) sonne: a vayle was drawne before theyr eyes, we may discern in a plainer maner. All these things chaunced to them in a figure, (q) but they are written to our reproofe, vpon whome the endes of the worlde are come. The lawe had but a (r) shaddowe of good thinges to come, not the verie images, &c. Where as Christe hath not onely engaged himselfe in a figure by his word to vs: but left his holie (l) spirite for the better finding out of the true sence thereof, which shall (t) remayne with vs for euer. If we lyst to decide this matter by most euident effectes, we may note, that all the dreames which Ioseph, Daniel, &c. tooke in hand to construe and interpret, were so certainlie and infallible true: Vt narrantes somnia, audirent quicquid postea rei probauit euentus, As all men that repayred to them for interpretation, were sure to heare as much before the matters came to passe, as the sequel made good afterward. Whereas the iudgements which are giuen of ours, are wilde, vncertaine, emptie, false, and daungerous: we may therefore now a dayes, as lawfully goe raunge the fieldes, and seeke for God in a burning bushe, a flame, an arke, a tabernacle, a clowde, a cherubin, or in the forme of an Angell, &c. as in a dreame, because those figures flourished about one tyme, bare one date, and made one ende together.

God might as well appeare to vs by dreames, as he dyd to them: but I haue layde downe reasons, why his wyll in this case is not answerable to his power, and therefore, as saint Ierome writeth trulie, touching another poynt, Singulorum priuilegia legem efficere non possunt, The priuileges of singular and speciall persons, makes no commou rule for all men in generall. If any man attempt to shake or infringe this answer, by alleadging the dreames of Peter, Paule, &c. At the first erecting of the Church of Christ: he must be taught, that though God thought it requisite to water tender plantes, lyke a skilfull husbandman with droppes of extraordinarie grace: yet after they beganne to settle, and to spreade theyr rootes in a fruitfull ground, this course of watering was no longer thought to be conuenient. The gyft of dreaming trulie or expounding dreames, as well as that of myracles, is mylke, which saint Paule gaue onely to the lyttle ones, as he writes himselfe, because they could not as yet: but now the Church of Christ which dayly groweth vp, as the same Apostle writes, In virum perfectum, in mensuram ætatis plenitudinis Christi, toward the state of a perfect man; into the measure of the age of the fulnesse of Christ: is weaned from such store of helpes, they that cease not styll to call for water or to crie for pappe, are eyther chyldishe or vnprofitable. Generatio mala & adultera signum quærit, &c. The wicked and adulterous generation enquireth after signes, but none other shall be giuen to it, then the signe of the prophet

M.ij.

Ionas

(o)  
1. Cor. 10. 1.  
(p)  
Psal. 18. 5.  
(q)  
1. Cor. 10. 11.  
(r)  
Heb. 10. 1.  
(l)  
Elsai. 59. 21.  
(t)  
Iohn. 14. 16.  
Gen. 41. 12.

Hiero. cont.  
Lucifer.

1. Cor. 3. 2.

Eph. 4. 13.

Matt. 12. 39.



## *A defensatiue against the payson*

Ioh. 20. 29,

Jonas. Wherefore I will conclude with the wordes of our Sauoure Christ to S. Thomas: Beati qui non viderunt et crediderunt, blessed are they which haue not seene, and yet haue beleeued.

This large discourse of dreames, wherein I haue proceeded further then I meant, to satisfie the friuolous and vaine conceites of persons that are blinded and abused by the same, may formally bee knitte vp in one worde or two. For as we must commend the iudgement that is drawen from dreames, *ὡς ἀπὸ τῶν σημεῖων*, as from signes or tokens to declare the good temper or distemper of the body (which is as much as eyther phisicke will require, or reason can allowe) so neyther doth the cannon of Gods holy worde, nor our owne discretion beleete, obserue or holde them to bee *αἰτια* that is, causes or discoueries of thinges to come, considering they haue not in philosophy *Rationem causæ et effecti*, nor any warrant dooth appeare in sounde diuinitie, why men that are awake and exercise theyr wittes, should be ruled by the whisking shaddowes of imagination. The thyrd kynde, which some call *συμπταματα* proceeding onely from the surfetie of the body, or deepe impressions of the day, no wise man wyll regarde, because as we reade in Cirill, there is scant one of them, in quo non sit vel perturbatio, vel pollutio, and therefore I will a slightly passe them ouer.

Oracles.

**N**owe come we to that kynde of prophecy, which was ascribed in old time to Oracles, differing not only in nūber but in kynde also, from euery one of these which haue bene answered before, in discourse vpon this matter, for although the Painimes thought, that the reasonable soule of man contained in it selfe, a secrete gift or sparke of possibillitye, to diuine of thinges to come: yet dyd they thinke withall that this light of nature was so dimme and dusky of it selfe, as till it were reuiued and stirred vppe, with a subtile wynd or vapoure rysing from the qualty and vertue of the soyle, it helped and auayled nothinge. Wherevpon, they leuelled theyr rousing gesses in this manner, that mans reason should bee like an eye to iudge, the vapoure as a lampe to light and direct that eye, and the sonne, that is, Apollo (whom the Painimes honored as the prince of prophecies) must eleuate and draw the vapoure from the center to the sight, and therewithall enable persons that are qualified and inspyred in this order, to the gifte of diuination.

Nowe to preuent an inconuenience that might arise, because it is not like, that any vapoure can ascende out of so grosse an element as earth, without some filthy mixture of foule matter, rather to diminish then increase or multiply the proper forces of the minde: they sette the spirites of the ayre (which flicker rounde about the worlde) like labourers to refine and purge, to digest and qualesse, to dispose and distribute the

*of supposed prophecies.*

the percing windes into the mindes of men, according to theyr seuerall capacities. For strongest meates are most ynwholesome for the weakest appetite, the shallowe waters can not beare a vessell of great freight, neyther dooth any wise man charge his heade with any greater burthen the by nature it is made to carry. Furthermore, they thought that that no kinde of liquor, how pure or sweete so euer, sauing of the ryuer Cidnus onely, was able or of force, to scoure the sacrificing knife, which was consecrated to Apollos vse, no water but the riuer Alpheus coulde temper the white playster: wherewith his aulter was repayred. No fountaine, but the Conduite of nine pypes at Athens (as I gesse in fauoure of the Muses) might be serued at solemnities of marriage, &c. And ther vppon concluded with like probabilitie, that certaine soiles by native proprietie, might sende vppe priuie windes and spirites, whereby men of lutable and correspondent qualities, with small endeuoure myghte attaine to prophecie.

Plut. de  
Orac.

Thuciddi.  
lib. 2.

Many haue beene stirred vppe with groues and woodes, some wyth springes and hilles, and I beleue vndoubtedly, sayth Cicero, Anhelitus quosdam fuisse terrarum, quibus inflata mentes oracula funderent, that certaine exhalations or vapoures rose out of the grounde, whereby mindes being inspired, or rather blowen and puffed vppe, gaue out those Oracles, so that by the iudgement of this author, (who tooke his aime by Platoes ouersight) we finde both what vncertaine holde those Oracles and Idoles had, which abused and bewitched all the worlde with lyes, and withall, that Cicero confesseth truely in an other place, Nihil tam absurdum esse, quod non dicatur ah aliquo philosophorum, in which respect, S. Paule aduiseeth vs as I conceiue, that we be not overtaken nor deceiued by philosophie. These are the reasons vppon which the frames of Oracles were built, but with such tickle hold, as they can not keepe out paper shotte, much lesse endure the cannon of the scripture. For if it be most true, which is recorded in the booke of wysedome, that an earthly dwelling holdeth downe and depresseth our vnderstanding, and not onely the rules of philosophers ascribe the finest wyttes, to bodyes that partipat of the finest elements, as ayre and fire: but S. Paule himselfe exhorteth vs, Quæ sursum sunt sapere, non quæ super terram to fixe our meditations vppon thinges that are aboue, and not vppon the grounde, who can beleue that any vapoure, ryfing from the soyle which was accursed by the mouth of God himselfe, and commaunded to bring forth nothing else but thornes and thistles, further then it shoulde be forced by the sweate of browes, shoulde make our sense more perfite or diuine, to gesse at misteryes which are as farre deuided from our present viewe, as the easte from the west, or as Adam from Antechrist.

De diuine  
lib. 2.

Col. 2, 8.

Col. 3, 2.

Gen. 3.

Cotta propoundeth this Dilemma, to the collectors of Apollos offering

M. iij.

fering



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

fering, Si deus est, cur se in terram abdidit? if he be God, what cause hath he to shroude himselfe within the bowels of the earth? as yf hee tooke it for as difficult a matter, to draw diuinitie from clottes of sand, as maiesty from the froth of wantonnesse. Nowe that the Island Delphos, whereas Apollos Idole was adored with exceeding reuerence, was inspired in this manner, Plutarch holdeth for a principle, & I disprooue with more sounde authoritie. For if this doctrine might be prooued true, the plowmen which bestowe theyr time in manuring, earing, and touning vp the ground: should be more prophetically then the priestes themselues, which were a greate absurditie. Agayne, that Islande coulde neuer haue brought foorth so many fooles, as made the world to smile, while the Prophets of the true and onely wise God indeede, lurked in the solitarie groues, and vnder shrubbes of Iuniper. Notwithstanding, hence the fable sprang as I suppose, of the first Prophet found by chance in an olde vaulte in Hettruria, without knowledge either of his name, hys dwelling, or the meane that conueyed him thether. Not vnlike the foolish dreame of Newbrigenfis, a countriman and writer of our own, concerning two young children brought to Wolpit in Suffolke, with an Eastern winde, without so much as any glimse of probabilitie. Some seeke to pull and hale in Aristotle, to the defence of this supposed vertue by the soyle, because he writeth in one booke, that richer metalls stronger Steele, fayrer women, and more actiue men, are bredde in one soyle then an other &c. as though there were not greater reason for such bodies, as are onely framed and congeled of the substance of the soyle it selfe, to participat with qualities thereof: then for the reasonable soule, which Aristotle himselfe calleth *ενταλεια*, that is a kynde of Quintessence or perfectione, because it hath not Principium commutationis in se, any beginning of alteration in it selfe, to borrowe any weake contagion or tainte from earth, which as I noted before, is by manifolde degrees the grossest element. Qui terrenum habent fundamentum, consumuntur tinea. They that haue an earthly foundation, shall bee consumed by the mothe, and againe, the firste man of earth earthly, the seconde manne of heauen heavenly. Such as is the earthly, such also are the earthly, and such as are the heavenly, such also are the heavenly: but the spirite breatheth where he will, and thou hearest his voyce, but knowest not when hee commeth nor whither he goeth, so is euery one which is borne of the spirite &c. For that which is borne of the fleshe is fleshe, and that which is borne of the spirite is spirite, in respect whereof, he that is not borne againe, can not enter into the kingdome of God &c. because wee are conceiued and borne in sinne, and till we be incorporate into the body of the spouse of Christ, by the ministry of his worde and sacraments,

De Anima  
lib. 3.

Iob. 4, 19,  
1. Cor. 15,  
47

Ioh. 3,

### *of supposed prophecies.*

aments, the wrath of God remayneth vpon all the sonnes of Adam.

Nowe whereas some Philosophers, more sensible and lesse wilfull then the rest, demaunded by what meanes it could be brought to passe, that the Isle of Delphos remayning still in substance, situation and qualitie, the same that it was wonte to be: coulde not withstanding, be depriued of this grace and gift of breathing out & affoording Oracles, yf the windye vapoure, which ascended from the soyle, were any parcell of the proper and true cause thereof: theyr Proctors answered, that as we see before our eyes by dayly prooffe, Quosdam amnes exaruisse, et in alium cursum deflexos, that certayne riuers were exhausted and diuerted to an other course; so likewise the spirite, which inspyred the cheefe prophetesse, myght well inough be silent for a time, and yet reuiue againe by reuolution.

But who sees not howe loosely these extreemes are tyed together? For as I will confesse, that thinges which are may chaunge, so can not they conclude vpon thys graunte, that thinges which neyther are nor euer were existent, (otherwyse then by error and grosse misconceite) can choppe or chaunge, deceiue or dallye, perish and reuiue without a reason.

Agayne, the riuers are compounded of the corruptible elements, and therefore subiect to the tearmes of locall alteration: whereas the true and euerlasting God (by whom all prophets must bee prompted and inspyred, that will purchase credite by theyr gyft) as he teacheth by the Prophet Malachie, Non mutatur, is not altered. Demetrius an olde Philosopher, hath founde a finer shift to ward this blowe, supposinge that the spirites which attended vpon Oracles, waxing weary of the friuolous and impertinent demaundes, which were propounded dayly by the trauailours that repayred thether: at the length, for very shame and detestation of the peoples importunitie, retyred from the temple. As though men sinned not as greuously before, while Oracles were in theyr ruffe, and the cuppe of infidelitie being filled vppe to the very brymmes, cast vppe so foule a stincke into the nostrilles of the God of hostes: as almost nothing coulde be added or augmented by the wickednesse which succeeded afterwarde, and touchinge friuolous demaunds, we may be sure, Apollo would haue sooner punished, the want of due regarde vnto the place & reuerence in men, then haue abidden the disgrace and eclipsing of his owne diuinitie. It may be very well, and I beleue also, that the diuill blushing at his owne abuse, and fearing leaste the people woulde in time werye of so many shvftes and sutes of lyes, remooued with his bagge and baggage to some other place, where the world was not so well acquainted with his treacherie.

Mal. 3. 6.

Cleombrotus



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

Cleombrotus, as I reade in Plutarch, seeking rather to cutte then to vnloose this knotte, referres himselfe to the report of a certayne sauadge or wyldeman, who hauing spent the most part of his tyme among the furies and satyres of the woodde, tooke vpon him to assure the world (albeit Apollo seemed speechlesse, and forbare to delyuer Oracles and aunsweres as he was wont:) yet was he not depriued of his gifte, because the same was onely sequestred in the keeping of a goddesse for a tyme, after the date whereof, Apollo should recouer credite with encrease, and the gyft should be restored by the destinies. Belyke this goddesse had inioyned sequestration, as a kinde of penance for his wanton loue with Daphne, or with some other Nimphe, so grosse in those dayes was the peoples ignorance, eyther for that God had blinded theyr eyes with a miste of couetous desire, as they would doubt of nothing that tended to their benefite, or in respect, the ryfing sunne appeared not as yet, which should desperle and cleare vp the cloudes of infidelitie.

Onely Cicero, being neyther confident inough to giue checke to lyes and sonde reportes, nor able to finde out a better and more lykeliereason, of the silence and surceasing of Apollos Oracles, confesseth wylingly the thing it selfe, but leaues the cause to be debated at more leysure. Another of that crew was not ashamed to giue out, that as the greatest Oracle of all Bæotia gaue ouer speaking, at the coming of a cruell Dragon to that place, so was it not vnlke but Apollo, finding himselfe forced and constryned, by the desolation and dispeopling, of the countries round about, eyther to discourse with beastes and trees, or not at all, with drew himself into some other quarter of the world, that was inhabited & frequented with more store of company. For Vbi populus ibi quæstus, where people are, there goes the gaine, sayde Pimander, which being graunted, I will certainly conclude with the Poet, that,

*Utilitas facit esse deos qua nempe remota,  
Templa ruunt nec erunt aræ nec Iupiter vllus.*

But howe threadbare and thinne a cloake, this impertinent example of Bæotia brings in to keepe out so foule a storme, shall be conceyued easily by those which note, that as falschood creepeth into corners, and as Christ hath taught vs in the Gospell, Qui male agunt oderunt lucem, they that doo euill, hate the lyght, so had there not beene first a wilderness or a desert in the place, where the temple was erected afterward, Apollo would neuer haue made choyse therof, for the better colour of his couine. In lyke manner, if afterward, vpon the peoples ceasing and desisting to frequent an Oracle of lyes, the temple had not growne fyrst into contemptt, and herevpon become a wilderness, the dragon which by nature seeketh solitarie groues, would neuer haue repayed thether. But if Apollos force had beene but halfe so great, as the blind-

*of supposed prophecies.*

blindnesse of that age would haue vs to beleue: one dragon could not haue remoued him without a writte of Certiorari, for the arke of covenant gaue nor place to Dagō, but Dagō fel down prostrate before it, & c Elias was not hindred or impeached in his ministry by the priestes of Baal, but those Balamites were not able, to worke any thing from morning vntyll noone in the presence of (a) Elias, whervpon they launched theyr owne flesh with kniues, for despight and furie. Baall was not able to put Daniel to flight, with ma.estic: but Daniel enforced Bel to stoope by the weight of his (b) message. To conclude, Christ shrunke not aside for feare of Sathan, but Sathan with his swarme of wicked angelles, hauing left the poynt of theyr presumption in the sheelde of his assurance, grew so (c) wearie of contending with himselfe, as afterwarde they could not abyde, eyther the sound or (d) shadowe of his ministers. But God provided safer remedies for his elect, that were stung and wounded in the wyldernesse, by looking vp to the braſen (e) serpent, as a figure of that blessed seede: who ought in tyme to cruse that wilie serpent's head, which wayteth at (f) our heeles: and who should drag (g) Leuiathan, with a hoke of iron by the nostrelles out of his den, and destroy the great whale in the sea: to conclude, who should extyrpe and roote vp all the generations of vipers, and thus it came to passe, that euen as they which are stung by scorpions, can not recouer health without theyr oyle, no more could man, in whome the deuill leste his sting in paradise, without the sacred bloud of Iesus Christ, who was prefigured by the braſen serpent in the desert. Wherefore concerning this departure from the temple, it is no maruell, that when the parasites or familiars, which spake in tronkes and hollowe places, were repelled from their harbour, vpon feare of plaine discouerie, by the morning starre which was at hand, the blockes almighty lost theyr beating of theyr pulse, and were conſtrayned to auoide that salt rhowme by some other meane, which caused them to cough vp so many glosing lyes, for the spoyle of the people.

Others were of the minde, that as the spirites, which were truchmen and interpreters to Oracles, had a certayne tyme prefixed wherein to liue, so when the date was at an ende, they could discerie no lenger. A meete couer surelie for such an emptie cuppe, as if the iudgement which is pronounced by the mouth of God himselfe, were not euerlasting, eyther to reward or paine, for neither can the gnawing woorme of one be satisfied with spoyle, nor the shining comfort of another, be obscured or eclipsed by antiquitie. Beside, if those supposed gods were false, it was not possible for them to deliuer truth, but by meere chance, if true, then was it not so difficult and harde a point, so often as one truchman were eyther silent, dead or stept vpon an errand out of the way, to find out another Mercurie, that might be no lesse able to supply that office.

N.j.

Belyke

1.Reg.5.3.

(a)

3.Re.18.28.

(b)

Dan.14.21.

(c)

Matt.4.10.

(d)

Acts.5.15.

(e)

Num.21.8.

(f)

Gene.3.15.

(g)

Iob.40.2.



## A defensatiue against the poyson

Belyke the spirites had the qualitie of fruite or salt-fishe, which decaye with tyme, as one compareth them, or else the flesh-pottes of Egypt beganne to coole, for want of theyr accustomed and woonted offerings. For so long as Manna was accounted deintie, wee finde not that the Israelites complayned of their wearie wayes, so long as Bell was serued with his messe of meate: not one of the blacke garde made proffer to forsake the vault: So long as Micha will, implere manum, fill the hand, he shall not want a Leuite to instruct his familie, whyle Christ had one barlie loafe, the cormorantes, which sought onelic satisfaction of the belly, would not depart to their houses, & so long as there is one ounce of golde or siluer left about the shrine, some greedie sicophant or other wyll not sticke to crie out, *μυζάνη ἡ Ἀφροδίτη Ἐφεσίων*, great is Diana of the Ephesians. By this we learne, that Oracles are most lyke to bagpipes and shawmes, which sound no longer then they are puffed vp with winde, and played vpon with cunning. For whereas Plutarch writeth, of a maruellous adoo with storme and thunder, at the departure of a spirite from his Oracle: I cannot better compare that spirite, then to a tallowe candle, which hauing burned a good whyle within the socket, at the last goes out with a most filthy fauour, so loth is the deuill to depart from any pleasing seate, wherein he hath bene intertayned with delyght, and feasted with so many fauours.

We neede seeke no further then the booke of G O D, to finde what sturre the deuilles made, before they would be driuen out of the men, which had bene long possessed by theyr tyranny. Sometyme they rored out alowde in most lamentable sort, sometime they stroue with violence, and forced men to leape out of the gulfie into the parching flame, that is, out of the lesser into the greater miserie. Tullie giueth a more likely reason in one place, of the fayling of Apollos Oracle, confessing that they waxed euerie daye more cold, when men became lesse credulous, as if the credite which they wanne before, had not depended on the woorth of theyr owne desert, but of our facilitie to be deceyued. But true it is, that the neerer Oracles approched to the time, wherein it pleased God to take our flethe vpon him, for the sauing and redeeming of the world: the more they fayled in theyr vtterance. A counterfeit of saint Vincentes rocke, cannot abyde the lyfe of a perfect Diamonde. A paynted glasse (how cunningly soeuer it be recommended with a foyle of Dragons bloud) yet shrinketh at the blush of a Rubie. Lucifer forgoes his lyght at the ryfing of the sunne. The witches could not keepe theyr countenance before Moses, Zedechias before Ieremy, the paynted idoll of darne (a) Venus, in the vaute of the Sepulchre: nor Sathan (b) in the syght of him, in whose name all knees ought to bowe, both in heauen, on earth, and vnderneath the earth, &c. And who according to the promise of the Prophetes mouth, should leade (c) captiuitie

(a)  
Euseb. de  
vita const.  
lib. 3. cap. 25  
(b)  
Phil. 2. 10.  
(c)  
Psal. 67. 19.

## *of supposed prophecies.*

tiuitie captiue. This was the golden day, which was ordeyned for the  
 blasting of the deuilles pride, and to make an ende of his vngodlie re-  
 giment: (d) Quod enim antiquatur & senescit, for that which groweth (d)  
 olde and waxeth auncient, is neere to decaie, as the Apostle writeth to Heb. 8. 13.  
 the Hebrues. By Christ onely we may be bold to demandaund of death,  
 where his (e) sting is? and of hell, what is become of his victorie? He (e)  
 hath chased spirites from theyr haunt, broken downe the brasen gates Ose. 13. 14.  
 of hell, beaten Sathan vnder foote: with whatsoeuer else, that dare op-  
 pose it selfe against the face of trueth, and made a ready, franke, and o-  
 pen passage, whereby the sonnes of Adam may be saued.  
 The Arke was no sooner come among the Philistines, but they be-  
 tooke them to theyr beeles forthwith, crying out, (f) Venisse Deum in (f)  
 castra, that God himselfe was come into the campe, &c. The forcerers 1. Reg. 4. 7.  
 confesse themselves, that Moles wrought with the (g) finger of almighty (g)  
 God. The (h) Priestes of Egypt were constrayned to confesse, that Exod. 8. 19.  
 none but the God of Israel could cure theyr dangerous infirmities. The (h)  
 witche, to whome king Saule repayred for aduise in his deepe distresse: 3. Reg. 6. 5  
 seemed to wunder (i) greatly, how he durst expect or hope for any com- (i)  
 fort at her hand, when God had giue him ouer to misfortune. And wic- 1. Reg. 18,  
 ked men aske in another place, who was able to redeeme them from  
 the handes of that almightie God, who had tormented and afflicted (k)  
 Egypt, with so many greuous plagues and diseases in the wyldernes: 1. Reg. 4. 8  
 The greatest enemies to the Prophete Ieremie, were constrayned to (l) (l)  
 acknowledge, that he had doone nothing worthy of reproofe or death, Iere. 26. 16.  
 because he spake vnto them in the name of God, &c. Salomon hauing  
 receiued a full measure of discretion and wisdom, by the gift of God,  
 is sayde, in that respect, to haue excelled all the Egyptians in that 3. Re. 34. 30.  
 wisdom, wherein they tooke vpon them, and professed to exceede  
 all others. Elnathan, Dalaias, and the rest, which had no taste of truth or Iere. 36. 18.  
 godlinesse, beside, for any thing I reade, withstoode the King when he  
 would haue burned the booke of the scriptures. Nabuchodonozzer, al-  
 though an vtter enimie to true religion, confessed, that his prophetes Dan. 4. 15.  
 were blinde doltes, and that none sauing Daniel alone, who was the  
 minister of the true and euerlasting God, could expound his visions. 4. Reg. 3. 12.  
 Ichosaphat a wicked king, would not deny that the woord of God was  
 with the Prophet Elizeus: and the King of Siria, as bad a man in all res- 4. Reg. 8. 8.  
 pectes, if not a woorse, was glad to craue his counsell and aduise in a  
 great matter. Ieroboam, notwithstanding his pretended confidence in  
 the Calues of Dan and Bethel, sent his wife to the prophet Ahias in  
 Sila, for intelligence touching the plight of his afflicted and diseased 3. Reg. 14. 2  
 Infant. Cyrus was desirous to be recommended vnto GOD by the  
 faithfull Iewes: as the Turke is lykewise, to be prayed for at this daye  
 by the Munks of Palestine. Herode feared saint Iohn Baptist, knowing  
 him



## A defensative against the poyson

him to be a iust and holy man: and he kept him, and by hearing him, dyd many thinges, and he heard him willinglie. Simon Barieu, being both a false prophet and a coniturer, desyred to heare the word of God, and though Simon Magus were esteemed off exceedinglie, among the multitude for witchcraft: yet finding such straunge signes and myracles, to be daylie wrought by the blessed Apostles, and after so slight a manner, Stupens admirabatur, being much amazed, sayth saint Luke, he fell to woonder.

By these examples we maye learne, what caused Oracles to cease, and in howe seruile awe the Liuide of religious and godlie Prophetes, comming with a message vouchable bothe before God and man, and albeit for theyr credite sake, they seemed for a while to resist and strue, yet truth preuayled at the length, against the secrete ambushes of Sathan and his garde, departing out of the field with victorie. But after Christ himselte was come, in the fulnesse of tyme prefixed and prescribed by his Father, O good Lord, what a fitte of feare and quivering surprised all the fiendes of hell, vppon the sight of so diuine a maiestie? But heere we haue to note, that albeit they were not ignoraunt by that which they had heard and read, that this was he which should cut short their scopes, & take downe their crest: yet proouing themselues heerin, to be by so much lesse malitious and wilfull then the Iewes, they neuer were ashamed to aguise his godhead. For first the spirits which conuer-

(a) Matth 8. 29. sed most among the graues, & beset the waies in so straunge a maner, as

(b) Iac. 2. 19. no mā could passe without offence: cried out to Christ, what (a) haue we to doo with thee, O Iesu thou sonne of God? Why comest thou to torment vs before our tyme? &c. A notable and liuely president of that

(c) Mark. 1. 24. historicall and seruile faith, whereby the deuilles are affirmed, by saint

(d) Acts. 16. 16. (b) Iames, to beleue and tremble. Another in the (c) Sinagogue, confessed him to be the sonne of God. The (d) Pythouisse acknowledged saint Paule, to be the minister of the lyuing God, and to preach the doctrine of saluation.

(e) Chrysost. de Apollo (e) was enforced; as Chrysostome writes, to graunt, that so long as the monument of any blessed Martyr which had suffered for laud. Pauli. Christ, and slept in expectation of a ioyfull daye, were at his nose, he Homi. 4. could not for his hart affoord one Oracle. For so great is the kindenesse 4. Re. 13. 21. of our louing Father, as he toucheth oftentimes, to worke more

Matth. 9. 21. mightilie by the coffine of Elizeus, by the hemme of his own garment, the shaddow of S. Peter, A& 5. 15. and the Naphins of S. Paule, Act. 19. 12 not for theyr glorie, but to glorifie himselte, more fully by the vertue of his ministers: then all the byrds of Sathans nest are able to deuise,

(f) Mark. vlt. by theyr Names and figures of inuocation. We were not assured by the bond of any mortall man, but by the word of Christ himselte, that such lyke signes should followe thole that (f) beleued in his name, &c. and

*of supposed prophecies.*

and againe: that so many as beleued in his name, should doe the  
 workes which he did, and (g) greater also, because he went to his Father,  
 so that this ouerrunning measure of extraordinary grace, at the first estab-  
 lishment of faith, could not seeme strange to those that beleued in his  
 promises, inasmuch as the Iewes themselves had so much good maner,  
 as to giue glorie and prayse to God: (h) *Quitalem potestatem dedit*  
*hominibus, who gaue such power to men.* In this respect, the Christi-  
 ans were euerie where adorned in olde tyme, with the style and tytle of  
 (i) *Incinta mentorium oppugnatores*, oppugners of all kinde of sor-  
 cerie, as the Kinges & Queenes of England are defenders of the faith, &c.  
 When Iulian the runnagate, demaunded counsell of a certayne Oracle  
 in Daphne: the deuill, sayth mine Authour, (k) *Babilam Martyrem re-*  
*formdans, fearing Babylas the Martyr*, whose body slept thereby, and  
 had beene sometimes a true minister of God, and a temple of the holy  
 Ghost, would not giue aunswer. Macarius in Egypt, and another bea-  
 ring the same name at Alexandria, were no sooner landed and arriued  
 in a certayne Iland, where the deuill was adored for his Oracles: but  
 forthwith the spirites, which attended as his garde, began to shake and  
 quier, as if they had beene taken with a fitte of an ague. Isidorus a  
 blessed Martyr, comming by Gods prouidence into a certaine wylder-  
 nesse, wherein the persecuting tyraunt Valens had confined him, for  
 the testimony of a most religious and godlie conscience, the deuill fled  
 forthwith out of his truncke, enforcing the priests daughter his inter-  
 preteffe, to crie out, after the same sort that the spirites did, of whome  
 I spake before: *O vestram potentiam, O famuli Christi, vbique a vobis*  
*abigimur? O what a kinde of power or vertue should wee call this,*  
*which you exercise that are the ministers of Christ, for by you we are*  
*expelled out of all places? &c.* Neither is it any woonder, since Oracles  
 are put to silence, spirites wexe dumbe in such a presence, *Idque prop-*  
*ter reuerentiam Christianæ maiestatis*, and that for the reuerence of  
 Christian maiestie. Asterias a noble man by byrth, and withall a blef-  
 sed saint, perceyuing that the Sacrifice which was cast euery yeere into  
 the sea, by meane of charmes and sorceries, seemed to vanish out of the  
 peoples sight, and that the vulgar sort were more abused by this strata-  
 geme, then any other sleight that theyr blinde guides and leaders could  
 deuise: besought our Lord vpon his knees, in the bowelles of his onlie  
 sonne, that this pretended colour of iniquitie might cease, to the glorie  
 of his holy name, and the reproofe of all his enemies. Wherevpon, the  
 sacrifice began to flote aboue the streame, and could not afterward be  
 made to sincke, by any tricke of arte that the Priestes could exercise.  
 Apollo confessed at another tyme, as Eusebius reportes, that the godlie  
 men which lyued in that quarter, were the greatest hinderance, *Quo mi-*  
*nus vera loqueretur, why he spake not trueth, and being further pressed*

(g) Iohn. 14. 12.

(h) Matth. 9. 8.

(i) Euseb. hist. lib. 5. cap. 16

(k) Socrat. hist. lib. 7. cap. 16

Theod. hist. lib. 3. cap. 5.

Theod lib. 4. cap. 19.

Augu. ad dulcit. ques. 104.

Euse. lib. 7. cap. 14.

Idem. lib. 2. cap 52.



### *A defensatime against the poyson*

to declare, by what priuie markes or signes a man might distinguish those good men, from others of the common sort : his aunswere was, that they were cheefelie to be sorted out and knowne, by theyr profession of Christe Iesus. Wherevpon the sword of persecution beganne a freshe to brandish, and to rage more bloudie against the saints of God, then it had before. For such was the blindnesse of those hellishe Emperours, as to wreake theyr malice vppon Priestes and Bishoppes of the christian church, whome they supposed to be set vp in despight of them, they were not ashamed vnder hand to confesse, the personnes to be iust and innocent, against whome they bent the force of theyr strongest battery. Whosoever therefore lyst to ponder and examine these & such lyke mightie works of God, which he perfourmed, in the tender spring of our religion, as it were of purpose to seale, approoue and ratifie the doctrine, which his disciples and Apostles preached ouer all the world, and to teare away that vayle of ignorance from the Rabbies eyes, by the streesse of trueth, which tyll that day was vnreueled, at the reading of the Scriptures in the Sinagogue : neede not to woonder what might be the reason, why the deuilles Oracles began to cease, before the coming of that immaculate and spotlesse Lambe, which should washe away the sinnes of all the world, neyther was there any cause for Cicero, to professe his wilfull ignorance heerein, if he had been but halfe so well acquainted with the Prophete Esay, who by the ministerie of saint Phillippes preaching, made the matter plaine to Queene Candaces Chamberlayne, who was that sheepe which should be made a sacrifice for sinne, as he was with Platos common wealth, that is, with a fourme without weight, and a shaddowe without substance. I wyll conclude this poynt, with a straunge report deliuered by Plutarch, though himselfe were altogether faithlesse, of one Epitherfes, who hauing embarked himselfe in a Pinnesse to passe into Italie; heard the name of Thamos, that is of the Pilote of that Barke (wherein he sayled) twise redubled, and as it were by one sounde of voice together. The Pilote making aunswere to the third demaunde, which was after a good pause, was charged and inioygned with deepe bonde and great solemnitie, that so soone as he came to the flattes, beneathe the lytle Ilandes called Echinades, he should in any wise pronounce alowde, that the great Pan was dead : which beeing doone according to the fourme prescribed by the voice, there followed immediatlie so lamentable shrikes and out-cries, as it were, of many spirits flocked in consort together, and oppressed with dispayre, as all the marriners were abashed and amazed at the matter.

Great inquirie was made afterward among learned men, who this great Pan might be, some sayd he was the sonne of Penelope by Mercuris, and I knowe not what beside : but the better sort, comparing the  
circum-

Esai. 33. 7.

Acts. 8. 28.

## *of supposed prophecies.*

circumstances of the time, wherein this accident fell out (which Plutarch sayes, was during the raigne of Tiberius) with that blessed hower, wherein the sonne of God, enduring the most greivous torment and conflict of death, vnder the same Emperour, cancelled that olde obligation and hand-writing (which ryll then was in full force, and euer ready to be brought foorth against vs). by the merite of his suffering, and triumphe ouer all the powers and principalities of hell: may be bolde to warrant & assure themselves, that this great Pan was the great fiend of hell, who was depriued in that instant of his sting, & brake his necke against the stone, Super quem, qui ceciderit confringetur, vpon which, whosoever falleth shall be broken into many peeces: so that Christ, by this meane, was the death of death, and led captiuitie captiue. Wherefore, as we learne by these infallible and certaine grounds, that there is neither plotting nor conspiring against G O D, that darknesse must giue place to lyght, and deceit to trueth, that as we read in Iob, Qui sibi videbantur sapientes, non audebant contemplari, they that seemed wise in their owne conceytes, durst not presume to gaze vpon this piercing sonne, &c. And as Dionisius the Bishop of Alexandria declares, the deuill hath bene euer commaunded by the godly, by the three sundrie meanes, Spiritu, aspectu, voce, that is, Spirit, looke, and voice: so may we rest assured, that the wicked spirits are not Serpentes reguli, quibus non est incantatio, such Cockatrices as no charme can qualifie. If God be with vs, who is able (sayth saint Paul) to contend against vs? *οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμῖν ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀντιτάξας ὁ θεός*, for neyther sathan, nor the destinies themselves, can ouer-rule a man that is religious and honest. He lyueth in a seruile awe of the better sort of men, and onely spendes his malice against those, that are not shaded and protected vnder the wings of fauour.

Col. 2. 14.

Esa. 8. 14.

Matt. 21. 44.

Pro 21. 30.

Iob. 37. 24.

Iere. 8. 17.

Lactan. de  
Origerr.

**N**OW let vs looke into another kind of gessing and diuining, by the sight, aspect, and secret influence of Starres & Planets from above, so much more to be feared and suspected then the rest: as it mountereth and aspieth neerer to the throne of God, and as sathan, who remembers that himselfe was once a shining Starre, hath plotted and deuised more deceytfull snares vpon this ground, to inueigle and deuowre the discontred. And though some perhaps, who prescribe of greater gayne by lyke conceytes, (then eyther wyll be wincked at in a schoole of trueth, or can be reaped by playne dealing) take offence that I, which neuer helde the credite of a nouice in these matters, should confront the greatest Rabbies, & controwle the course without knowledge of the compasse: yet doubt I not, but when my reasons haue bene peized in a paire of equall ballaunce without either error or preiudicate conceyte, it will appeare, that with my carelesse trauell in the desert

Astrologie.



### *A defensatine against the poyson*

desert of deceitfull shewes, I haue layde open and deseried more flaws of follie, then the rypest doctours of that facultie, shall be euer able to repayre by the reache of witte, or to couer with the sleighes and stratagemes of the false experience.

Democritus by walking vp and downe, without discourse or argument, confuted those vaine fooles, which tooke vpon them to defende *Corpora non moueri*, that there was no motion in bodyes: and therefore need I put my selfe to no greater paines, in taking downe the creast of vaine Astrologers, who were as good defend that bodies were not mooued any way, as to ascribe such houses, faces, images, aspectes, and signes to Planettes, as neither are apparant to the sence, nor reuealed in Philosophy. Moreouer, hauing warily, not vnaduisedly resolved, to dispearse the maine packe of all diuining faculties, whereby the pride of man presumeth without warrant of holy writte, to looke into the secrete counsayles of almightie God, which are concealed in a clowde: I could not let Astrologie escape my penne without a dashe, least some might eyther feede theyr sonde conceyts, with fayned and supposed fauours of the starres, or my selfe be thought to discredite and betraye, the cause which is so confidentlie vndertaken. The greuous penance, which a multitude of learned Doctours haue discharged and perfourmed many yeeres agoe, for mispence of tyme and trauell, in the quest of matters that bring forth no fruite, might serue to satisfie the wise about this point, and to repell the censure of the scrupulous: but if they wyll not yet forsake theyr painted heauen, which representeth nothing to the sence but shadowes of abuse, nor abandon fables of theyr foolish arte: yet let me craue suspence of rash and vnaduised iudgement (at the least) tyll the reasons which haue mooued mee, and men of deeper and farre ryper vnderstanding then my selfe, to flie theyr haunt, may be satisfied with sound aucthoritie.

My meaning is not, to declayne against the knowledge of the certayne course of heauen, of Planets with theyr motions, eclipses, & such other naturall and ordinarie meanes, as are both meete and necessarie, bothe to distinguish diuerse seasons of the yeere, & to ripen things that are most requisite for the maintenaunce of men, in which respect, the Greeke poet Aristophaner called Astronomie, *τὴν θειὰν τέχνην*, the diuine or heauenlie science: but I mislyke theyr fraudulent and false conceytes, which to content a malapart and saucie moode, abuse the nature of a lawfull signe, and seeke to drawe the beames (which were ordayned for a common vse) to the reaping of a priuate benefite. In the meane tyme, I require no more then Iosaphat dyd, in the third of Kings, of Benadab. *Ne gloriatur æque accinctus atque discinctus*, that he which buckles on his harnesse, wyll not boast or crake so much, as he that puttes it off when the field is wunne: nor that mine aduersaries in  
this

*of supposed prophecies.*

this matter, wyll not sound the trumpet to theyr owne disgrace, before the victorie. Fyrst therefore let vs note, that the most learned and auncient Philosophers, by searching grounds of nature to the bottome, could neuer lyght vpon this gyft of vnderstanding by the Planettes. Pythagoras a deepe Astronomer, by Platos owne confession, neuer dreamed De futuris contingentibus. Eudoxus, Cassander, and Archelaus, taking so much from the Starres and Planettes, as maye serue to iudge and to distinguish of the season, durst not steppe one inche beyond this rate, for feare of beeing hissed out of the schooles of true philosophie. Plato vouchsaueh not to touch vpon this arte in Timæo, when hee leaueth nothing vndiscovered about those heauenly bodyes: which is eyther possible almost, or fitte to be vnderstoode by any man. Aristotle, neyther in his Meteores, where he seeketh out the cause of the same, nor in his bookes, De cœlo, which are fittest for that purpose of all other, nor De generatione animalium, wherein Astrologers suppose that Planettes beare a mighty stroke, taketh any knowledge of the secrete properties of Starres: but rather giueth them by silence a more deadly nippe, then others that haue a deepe mislike, with more sharpe ingredience. Plotinus one of Platos schollers, hauing rather heard by rumour, then found out by reason, as we reade in Porphirie, that certayne busie fellowes had a taste of such a toye, discoursed in disproofe thereof with many reasons of great weight: and though Maternus, for the better countenance and credite of the cause, giue out that he was greuously tormented by the destinies, before his death for this offence: it forceth not, since Porphirie describing bothe the cause and manner of the same, recommendeth this, with diuerse other lyes of lyke effect, to the game for the whetstone. Democritus was woont to smyle at those, as Diogenes laertius, reportes, that onely lent their eares to the sounde of Lectures, in defence heereof. Carneades is made by Cicero to reason and dispute against the same, and the gaping Epicure, who doted in some other poyntes of weight, could not be brought by any meane, to delight himselfe with dreames and fancies of Astrologie. Alexander Auicen and Auerroes, whose breath is strong inough, to shake and batter all the paynted fortes and bulwarkes of starre diuiners, bende themselues with all theyr vttermoost endeuour, to deface all kindes of gesses, and coniectures by the Planettes: we cannot saye that those Philosophers were ignoraunt, considering they liued in the times, and diuerse of them in the verie places, where this arte was ryfest and of cheefe account, neyther is it lyke that they, which tooke vpon them to describe the kinde and properties of the smallest Ant or Flie, would haue omitted Iupiter or Saturne, if there had beene any such importance in theyr places and regards, as wee haue beene assured in the schooles of ignoraunce. But some wyll saye, the Chaldees were acquainted

O.j.



### *A defensatine against the poyson*

quainted with this arte before, and what wyll they conclude vpon this prooffe? That recordes were kept in Babilon, of all the rare natiuities that haue beene cast for the space of 70111. yeere together, as not one or two, but diuerse of their Authors write. It is not possible, for Phauocinus, a Philosopher, declares in Aulus Gelius, that they lyed in this account, and that they bragged of a longer date, then could be warranted by sound aucthoritie.

If they deriue their arte from Ptolome, the case is cleare, that he flourished (to speake of) but a while agoe, if from a longer date, let Ptolome be iudge, what certayne knowledge may be learned by this large account, where himselfe conuicteth Egypt of grosse errors, not onely touching some perticulars about the iudgement of aspects: &c. But in assent of signes, and which is more absurde, about the course and moving of the Planets. He was the first that enlarged all these poyntes, although some thinges of weight were added and adioyned afterwarde: wherevpon I note, that as it is not possible without certayne knowledge of the places, wherein the Planettes haue their walkes, or of the signers (vpon which Starre diuinitie dependes) to take any certayne ayme: so looke by howe much these diuiners were before the tyme of Ptolome, by so much their arte was more ridiculous, and though they should avow their tytle by the flourish of antiquitie, though theyr dissent were true, yet must they leese theyr credite by comparilon of rules, because the faultes and ouersights are euident. The best excuse that Petrus Apopenis can make, for Galens error about the Moone, is, that those matters were not fullie sounded and exprest in that age, which was no further off then the reigne of Commodus. Anaximander iauented Gnomonem, for the vnderstanding of the Equinoctiales. Ptolome the right vse of the Astrolabe: other some, our Ephimeredes. Tyll the tyme of Pithagoras, it was not generally vnderstoode whether Lucifer and Hesperus were two sundrie starres or one, shining at diuerse times. Heraclitus, fīue hundred yeeres before him, confessed in flatte tearmes, that he could not finde any matter woorthy noting in the former writers, touching the particulars of Planets, & yet they blush not to face out theyr errors with a vizard of antiquitie, which is commonly the broker of deceyt and ignoraunce. I maruell howe they can deuise to wpe away this plaine Sorites, that pearceth to the very quick of their supposed misteries. The Latines giue themselues to follow Greece. The Greeks deriue theyr knowledge from Arabia, Arabia from Egypt and Chaldaea: whereas Egypt and Chaldaea, by the doctrine of our greatest Rabby, Ptolome, as I sayde before, are cast off and forsaken for theyr errors. Beside, the Chaldeis were a wicked and vngodlie kinde of men, addicted wholie to the worshipping of false gods, and studdie of vnlawfull artes: in which respect, we should detest them rather as the teachers of abuse

### *of supposed prophecies.*

then vouch theyr credite as a maske of false diuinitie. Indeed, they gaue themselves to practise much about the Mathematicall, which make not any man more wise, sayth Aristotle: but more rype and pregaunt in the skyll of numbering. Neyther ought it to perplexe vs any whitte, that bothe Plato and Pythagoras were so desirous, to bestowe some tyme in Egypt in those dayes, for morall wisdom or increase of knowledge drew them not that way: but rather an intent to see, what God was honoured, and in what sort, among those menne which were preferred before others, in respect of seruient zeale and most precise obedience, to the rules of theyr owne religion.

I knowe that some haue gone about to fetch Abraham from hence, but eyther they were ouertaken and misledde by the neighbourhood of Hur, which confineth vpon Chaldaea: or they wyll not see the difference, which lyes betweene the course of nature and the priuiledge of grace, or they forgette the rule of Plato, that in all countries and Clymates vnder heauen, which bring forth greater store of badde men then good, so ofte as any one applies himselfe to better meanes, and degsnerateth from the common trade, he prooueth excellent.

Wee doubt not, but the Patriarches and holy Fathers of the couenant looked vppē to heauen, and praysed G O D in all his mightie workes: but that any one of them presumed to diuine of thinges inuisible, by Planets which they sawe, cannot be prooued by the Scriptures. This reason giueth a fowle checke to theyr vaine conceyts, but yet since they determine to be tryed and sifted by the Maximies of philosophy: I wyll not sticke to joyne and to demurre with them, vpon those verie groundes which themselves haue fortified. Fyrst therefore let them tell mee, whether all Philosophers auowe not heauen to bee an vniuersall cause, of all thinges that are bread and brought forth heere among vs vpon earth. If this bee graunted, as of force it must, then can I prooue by lyke auctorithy, that not remote and vniuersall causes, but those that are most proper and peculiar to euery body, bring theyr perticular effectes to passe, therefore ought we not for knowledge of perticular effectes, to resort to the Planettes. The sunne, which is the brightest, strongest and most effectiue Planet of the seuen, makes not *Quidlibet ex quolibet* (as rude vnskyllfull workemen carue the counterfeit of Mercurie out of euerie blocke) but *Ex materia preparata*, of stuffe that is first prepared and disposed for the purpose. Then not the sunne alone, sayth Aristotle, but *Homo & sol generant hominem*, the sunne together with a man and woman begette a man. Againe, we can not saye that the sunne maketh eyther winde or rayne, alone and by it selfe, which were vnpossible: but we acknowledge, that the sunne is able of it selfe to qualifie, extenuate or make thicke the grossest vapors, after such a sort, as they become more apte and fitte to dissolue and



### *A defensatiue against the poyson*

melt, eyther into winde or water . No man wyll looke for Tygers to be bred betweene a Ramme and an Ewe , nor for Lambes in a kinde of mountayne Beares, nor hope to gather grapes of a thorne, or figges of a thystle , because these or those Planettes , shewe them fauours at theyr breeding or appearing aboue ground in an equall measure : no more is it possible for any starre in heauen , to change the properties of any kinde of seede , which God by nature hath infused into euerie lyuing thing for the propagation of his creatures . Let vs put the case in such familiar and plaine examples , as maye make the point more euident to the plainest and most simple vnderstanding. A rowst henne sitteth vpon egges of sundrie fowles ; and all the Planets worke together for the bringing foorth and hatching of the same , according to theyr diuerse kindes : Is any man so simple now as to suppose , that because the Planets, vnder which they come to lyght, are affected in one sort, therefore the birdes shall not differre.

Againe , although the moderate and comfortable heate of a stoue, wherein the trees are sheilded in harde weather from the nipping frost, be equall and indifferent to all ; yet all the trees beare not one kinde of fruite, but apples, peares, or peaches in their proper quallitie. A Doctor preacheth vnto all his auditours alyke , and yet they take according to theyr owne conceite ; one kinde of seede was scattered bothe in the fertile and in the stony ground, though some were parched and consumed in the sonne for want of roote , the rest brought foorth fine hundredth fold to sustaine the people. Where many ouer-shodde themselves with fuming wines , the licquor maye be one, and yet not worke the same effect in all , for some sigh, others smile, some are dumme and silent , others attentiuie and full of wordes , some imbrace , others fight, some sleepe, others sing, according to the diuers humors of their minde and instinct of nature . The heart of man inspireth one and the same strength and lyfe, into all the partes and members of the body , and yet the partes doo not receiue the same in one degree , but so farre as is requisite , for the better and more full discharge of theyr diuerse offices. For example, the stomache by the force which it receiueth, is made able to digest the lyuer , to concoct and turne the nutriment to bloud , the splene , by sucking vppe the melancholie spirites , lyke a sponge , to purge the vitall partes, the muscles of our armes and legges, to stretch or shrinke themselves, according to the sturring of the body, our eyes to see, our handes to touch, and eares to heare, &c.

Thus, as the heart is a common and an vniuersall cause , so is the heauen , as notwithstanding generalitie of influence , one member maye consume and pine, when another is in perfect plight , so the same heate which melteth waxe , makes claye more harde , so the selfe-same Planets cherishe one thing, and consume another, altering theyr vertue and effect,

### *of supposed prophecies.*

effect, eyther according to the neighbourhood or distaunce of the place from whence the beames are sent, or to the nature of the bodye wherein the Planettes haue theyr operation. One heate of the body, causeth bothe Rubarbe and Agaricke to worke, but not alyke, for one purgeth choller, another fleame, and as we finde three thinges to bee considered in any cure, the complexion and constitution of the patient, the vertue of the medicine, and the learned skyll of him that vndertakes the cure, to temper and compound the same, so they that wyll diuine of thinges to come, must be no lesse expert in euerie slyght particular, or propertie belonging to the bodies, touching which they take in hand to giue a likelie gesse, then in the nature of the Planets, which effect the plotte, and most of all in his intent and purpose, who dyrecteth bothe the starres and vs, augmenting and detracting as it seemeth good to that diuine decree, which bringeth mighty thinges to passe, according to the course prefixed in his prouidence. To conclude, the beastes which were preserued in the Arke of Noe, from the rage of waters, and restrayned for a tyme from theyr wonted scopes, as soone as they were set at lybertie, and were commaunded to renew the world, marched not altogether in one measure, because they were preserued by one common cause: but the snayle beganne to creepe, the row-bucke to runne, the horse to galloppe, the fowles to flie, and euerie lyuing thing applyed it selfe foorthwith vnto that course or pace, which was most apt and proper to the kinde, whereof it was a member in the first creation.

Thus farre we see, that whatsoeuer charter was allotted by the voice of God himselfe to the earth, at the first beginning of the world, that she should bring foorth *Animam viuentem in genere suo, iumenta reptilia & bestias terræ secundum species suas*, A lyuing soule in her kinde, beastes and creeping creatures according to theyr seuerall and proper kindes, &c. remayneth yet inuiolate: and therefore it is vnpossible for any one Starre, or for all the Starres in heauen together, to suppress the properties of nature, or because this Planette frownes, or that, to cause that the chylde which is borne vnder it should neuer laugh: a horse should not neigh, a sheepe bleate, or that all together should not looue the fruite which commeth from themselues, because the Planettes (which are sayd to signifie the good or badde success of parents and theyr of-spring) are not well affected. Touching the motion of the Spheres and Planets thus much we confesse, that from thence the lower bodies drawe the first beginning, both of their action & life, againe, that Starres and Planettes by a certayne comfortable heate or qualitie (not lyke to that which is in elements, but rather by the which all other qualities are broched and maintained in their diuerse kindes:) enflame the secrete vertue which lyes hidden in the seede, and cause it

Gen. i. 24.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

to ripen in that maner, order, and degree, which the nature of the thing it selfe wyll permit and suffer.

Auerroes.

This supreme influence descending from the heauens, as from an vniuersall cause which so ruleth and directeth all, as it saueth and concerneth all, assisteth but impugneth not the course of kinde, was called by Pithagoras, *Lucis filia*, the daughter of the light, not because the light containeth our ability to see: but because without the same, sharpest sight can not discern or deeme of any coloure. Wherevpon we may conclude, that the life whereby thinges chaunge or multiplye beneath the moone, is furdered and made to worke, but not infused or engrafted by the nature of the planet, *Viunt enim hæc omnia per suas animas, perque animarum vim seminibus insitam, propagantur autem calore cœli suffragante (non quasi viuifico) sed ad vitam cuius per se capaces sunt commodissime disponendo*. For what Ass, vnderstanding hys wife to be with childe, would resort to Iupiter or Venus rather then to the common course of kinde, to know whether shee shoulde bringe forth a childe or a serpent, a man or a monster. Against these grounds it is alleaged by some writers in defence of such vaine toyes, that if there were not as wel planets of cold property to hasten death, as the warmth of vniuersal influence doth cherish life: all things should persist, and neither perish or decay for euer. But this taketh not away the poynt, for as the sunne in whom there is no colde at all, imparts his influence eyther to conserue or to consume, according to the property of the thing it selfe wherein he workes: so God resolving that in all things which are alterable and corruptible in this transitory life, there should be first an entry or beginning, then a state, and at the length an ende, disposed all the lights of heauen and accidents belowe, as apt and proper meanes or instruments of bringing that to passe which was foriudged by his prouidence.

Besides, theyr fond coniectures in this matter can not abide the touch for how should any planet be supposed to be cold, when it is not onely ruled in philosophie, that cold and heate are not in heauen: but besides admitted for a principle in Logicke and the same philosophie likewise, *Nulli speciei competere ex natura propria proprietatem repugnantem qualitibus his quæ de natura communi fluunt*, for reason in a man excludeth not the common sence which appertaineth vnto him indifferently, with all other liuing creatures *Ex natura generis*. The heauen it selfe is *vnitas corporum* an vnity of bodies, and therefore as one armie dependeth vpon one Generall, one state vpon one Prince, all numbers vpon vnitie: so must all planets communicate in one vertue, and as God is the cheefe of all thinges in the world, and yet no part of the, so doo the heauens communicate with all perticuler effects, not by giuing formes, but by extent of vertue.

The

### *of supposed prophecies.*

**T**he Peripateticke, that is (as I suppose) our wisest and most sound Philosophers, hold for a principle, that no planet (onely the Moone excepted) chaungeth propertie, but by regard of place. They cast theyr beames with greater strength and vertue from the toppe, more faintely when they stoope more lowe, and after they are once depressed, and in a maner drowned vnder earth, because the lyght cannot come through, (which Astrologers themselues haue called *Virtutis vehiculum*, the cart or conuey of their influence:) it breeds a doubt amōg the deepest in this facultie, whether they giue any strength or none at all, of this I am assured, that how vn sensible soeuer our Astrologers defend the Planets, to be stronger while the earth is interposed between their beams & vs, then when they are in *Loco duo duodecimo*, & dispose their influēce by ordinary meanes, that is, per aerem ambientem, no man aliue that hath one dramine of vnderstanding, will giue eare or hearken to theyr Paradox: *Qua densiora, maiora, propinquiora, plus lucis & caloris effundit*, those Planets that are thicker, neerer & greater then the rest, send forth more lyght, and giue a stronger heate then others that are thinne, farre off and small, but as for any other qualitie, wherein they may be sayd to differre or dissent among themselues, for my part I finde it not. Intention and remission only may worke some distemper, I confesse, In *semine preparato*, in the seede or subiect that is orderly disposed, & prepared to that alteration: but first it is so difficult to finde, and then so generall in respect of diuerse accidents, that must be vnderstoode about the preparation of the seede before we sound the depth, as almost it is not possible to reach to the bottome. There is one impression made in our natures by our parentes, another by the countrie which hath brought vs forth, another by the manner of our bringing vp, another by the reuerent regard and heed which men professe, to liue according vp to the positieue and ciuill lawes: and yet all these things should not only be ouer-ruled, but defaced ytterly as if they were none such, by the supposed properties as well of wādering as of fixed Starres, if we would graunt to the professors of the same their vnsteddie principles. We see that God created not a diuerse lyght, for the discerning of so many diuerse colours as appeare in the rainebowe: but one vniuersall lyght for all, which euerie Starre and Planet in the firmament increaseth for his owne particuler, & therefore we may likewise iudge, that he created not distinct and speciall properties in euerie Planet, for the perfecting of earthlie thinges, and performing of his holie wll belowe: but one kinde of influence descending with an vniuersall harmony from all the partes of heauen, and working diuerselie (as I haue sayde, and shall be forced often to repeate) according to the circumstaunces of the place from whence it comes, the season wherein it falles, and the subiect wherevpon it worketh.

That



### *A defensatime against the poyson*

That allegorie whereof Pythagoras is made an aucthour, supposing all the region beneath the Moone to be but one onelie Starre, and that euerie Planet hath within it selfe, the fourmes and figures of all thinges which are belowe, confirmeth vnder an obscure conceyte this generalitie of influence, as if not one of all the Starres or Planets, had a speciall or peculiar interest in any man or subiect more then other : but that altogether with vnited force, consented in all thinges, according to the principle of Lactantius, In cœlis vnitas ob elementis pugna, in heauen is perfect strength and vnitie, but strife and dissolution of thinges springeth from diuision of elements. The craft of sathan our olde enimie, hath taught vs to excuse our fault by strength and force of destinie, as if God, who is the liuelie spring and fountayne of all goodnesse, and as we reade in Genesis, Vidit omnia quæ fecit, & erant valde bona, sawe all thinges which he had created, and they were exceeding good : should haue inspired all the Planets with such wicked and malignant qualities, as theyd prouoke vs rather to commit dishonest thinges, then to followe good ; or as if the lawes of nature should enioyne, procure or teach, what nature dooth detest and punish.

For if by nature no man ought to spoyle or rob another, how cometh it to passe, that Mercurie disposed thus or thus at the time of our byrth enforceth theft, or if by nature all men be induced to confesse a God, as Tullie writes, although they differ in the choyce of right, why should the Starres encline or leade vs to idolatrie ? Can any thing bee found more iniurious to trueth, or more opposite to prouidence ? If I were as wylling to dallie and trifle in this weightie matter, as they seeme desirous to set vanitie to sale for the price of soules, it were not harde to prooue, and that euen by their owne aucthorities, that though the Starres were able to forewarne vs of our deedes, it followes not, they can disclose our sinnes, for as saint Ambrose notes, to transgresse is not Facere, sed deficere, to doo but not to doo, and diuerse other holde the same conceite, not only De peccato omissionis, but ingenerall, neyther maketh it against this any whitte, that such and such are sayde in Scripture, Fecisse malum, and that sinne is an action, because before we come to descant of the misdeede it selfe, we must consider and examine the first sweruing from the perfect rule of duty, and obedience to God and our neighbour, which consisteth in the breach of the commaundements.

I knowe that some late writers ( beeing ashamed of these sencelesse paradoxes, too long defended and maintained in the schoole of errour) confesse all Starres and Planets to be gracious and fauourable in their proper kinde : but forced to degenerate by mallice in the bodies, wherupon they worke, &c. Of whome we saye as Christe did of the Scribes and Phariseis, Quæ dicunt facite, quæ autē faciunt nolite facere, Doo as they

*of supposed prophecies.*

they preach, not as they practise, neyther let any man be so simple as to think, that though the grosse absurdities which haue no colour of defence, constrain them to subscribe to trueth in diuerse thinges, which preuayleth euer at the length against deceit: yet that they meane as they pretend, or deale in those thinges otherwise, then as the Epicures at Athens were wont to speake of God, with greater reuerence then any other sect in open schooles (although they lyued in theyr houses like brute beastes, which looking for none other lyfe then this, dyrected all theyr studies to the looue, and theyr dealings to the lust of pleasure) is neither probable nor possible. For first it is a principle among Astrologers, that certayne Planets are by nature gracious and kinde, as Iupiter and Sol, others malignaunt and offensive, as Saturne and Mars, Hoc chalcas ipforum dicit, This their great chalcas Ptolomie defends, and so must they, or else the kingdome of contingentes, which hath bene vnderfette and shored vp so many yeeres with such lyke paynted proppes, will fall downe flate and come to ruine, in despight of cunning.

To prooue that Planets of themselves are able to worke rare effects, they bring an instaunce of the sunne, which by the force and vertue of it selfe alone, say they, breedeth Rats, Frogs, Flease, and such vnperfect bodies as philosophie dooth teach, and wee haue prooued in our owne experience, *Spectatum admissi risum teneatis amici*. Is not this a sound foundation, trowe we, wherevpon to reare and builde a Babell, or a bable rather, *Cuius culmen pertingat vsque ad cœlum*, whose top may reach vp to the firmament? Or haue not they great reason to be ashamed and to blushe at their owne detestable abuse, which haue deceyued and misledde so many simple soules, by the glimse of grosse imagination? These are the meanes whereby they went about, *Celebrare nomen suum, priusquam diuiderentur in vniuersas terras*, to celebrate their name, before they were deuided ouer the face of all the earth, &c. And let me leese my credite, if this be not one of the best and most apparant reasons, that they are able to alleadge or vouch out of philosophie, for the countenance of their simple Oracles. The warderope is beggerlie which pawneth such pelde ragges for robes, and vndertaketh to diuine of Princes in their state, by comparison with Flease in a blanchette, and frogges in ameddowe.

Gene. 11. 3.

But to let slippe the childishe and vndecent vsage of so fonde an argument, which notwithstanding shoves the pouertie of their defence; I aunswer to the poynt it selfe, that since the sunne produceth these vile bodies, wherevpon they laye so stedfast holde, neyther out of euerie kinde of putrifaction, nor in euerie kinde of bodie, nor at all tymes of the yeere but one, of such and in such bodies onely, as by their proper nature are inclined to resolue into that kinde of excrement. I finde



### *A defensatiue against the poyson*

more reason to conclude vpon this ground, that the Planets worke according to the matter which they finde: then that they giue a seconde nature, or correct the first by their owne prerogatiue. Plutarch telleth, that of Bulles fleshe (after it beginnes to putrifie) Bees are engendred, of the flesh of horses hornettes, and serpents of the flesh of men. These different effectes cannot with any reason be ascribed to the sunne, because it tendeth and infuseth one proportion and kinde of influence to all, the other Planettes cannot challenge any stroke or interest heerein, because in whatsoeuer plight or altitude the Planets stand, this course is alwayes kept without respect, therefore is it plaine that all thinges beneath the Moone, are made ripe and perfect in their kinde, but not altered or chaunged by the Planettes. It is an ordinarie case, to finde martiall men borne vnder Venus, venereous wantons vnder Mercurie, melancholic students vnder Iupiter, Iesters vnder Saturne, and constant freendes vnder the Moone, which giueth a prowde checke to the base coniectures of Astrologie. For eyther by this meane, we shall be forced to ascribe our qualities to Planettes of a diuerse straine, which were absurde, or to deny that wee deriue or drawe them from this spring, which ouerthrowes the generall. Againe, whereas the rules of arte dispose indifferent and equall fauours and disgraces, vnto countries that are cited vnder one and the selfe-same Planet: we are certified by daylie prooffe, that one of these driues out and deuowres another.

Confes. li. 7.  
cap. 6.

Saint Augustine maketh mention of one Firminus a freend of his, who finding the fortunes of two children borne within his house, as farre as any man aliue could gesse, in the selfe-same moment and vnder one rooffe to differre so much, as one of them by course of lawe and custome of the countrie, must in time become the slaue and vassail of the other, who was heyre apparaunt to his Lord: gaue vp the studie of the Starres, as a spoyle of tyme and a schoole of vanitie. For what a thing is this to be compelled to so narrow straites, as eyther in defending equall and lyke fortunes, to belong to one and the same constellation, we shall be sure to lye: or in admitting any difference at all, we cannot set downe any certaine iudgement, touching matters that are meerlie future and in the hand of prouidence. If any man suspect the trueth of this report, because it makes so wide a breach into their strongest holde, let him remember first the credite of mine authour. If he contend and strine against the consequent, it is ineuitable, if he presume the minute not to haue beene so rightly taken as it ought: I see no reason to preferre the mallice of preiudicate conceyte, before the dilligence of one, who seeking rather to be satisfied with trueth, then to deliuer any thing that might discredit arte, omitted no respect or circumstance, that might gage the belly of the Trojan horse, which vnder colour of a sacrifice to Minerua, destroyes both comon-wealthes and

*of supposed prophecies.*

and Monarchies . The case of twinnes, which hauing beene begotten and brought forth so neere together, as it is almost vnpossible to think or to conceyue a straighter bond, are notwithstanding found to differ verie much in complexion, making witte and qualities, dooth grype and streigne Astrology so sore, as they that fauour and esteeme it moit, are glad to pant for breath, and laye the burden of the fault vppon the distaunce betweene twinnes, because tyme slippes away with such a speedy course, as a man maye sooner touch one spoke of the Nigidian wheele with one finger twise, then deeme of the natiuities of twinnes by one constellation . But let it be so betweene twinnes of one body, because natiuities, I graunt, are motions that proceede by successiue minutes and degrees (and yet that harmony, whereof Hipocrates makes mention, betweene those twinnes which alwayes wept and smyled together, rather by identitie of substance, to vse the proper word of the Philosopher, then agreement of the Starres, is passing straunge) yet how can they deuise a difference, or excuse their errors about others, which so farr as eyther dilligence or arte can ayme, were delyuered into the world in diuerse places at one instant? When all is doone, theyr base alaye wyll not abide the touch of a demonstration . For if the Planets wrought alyke by speciall vertue, there could be no difference in theyr effect : but since we finde so great a difference in theyr effect, it is not like that they are any causes of our luck in any thing. Iacob & Esau had Eandem natiuitatis horam, one and the same hower of natiuitie, as appeareth both by the (a) text it selfe, and by the iudgement of saint Chrysostome, one ascendent ouerspread them bothe with equall grace, and yet (c) priusquam aliquid fecissent boni aut mali, before they had doone any thing eyther good or bad, God looued one, and cast off another.

Therefore, we neyther can ascribe our actions or qualities to kinde altogether, because (d) Non omnes qui semen Abraham sunt filij, All that are of the seede of Abraham are not his sonnes, nor wholie to the manner of our bringing vppe, for Ioseph was brought vppe, so long in the court of Egypt, as he beganne to sweare, per (e) salutem Pharaonis, by the health of Pharaon, and yet obtained place among the Patriarches, nor any parcell of them to the Planettes, which produce no more then the nature of the seede affoordeth . If Astrologers wyll make a difference, betweene the proper influence of Planets, as it is conceiued in it selfe, and as it worketh with the second causes, for the bringing forth of any singular effect: they teach no more then euerie sheepeheard can as readily finde out as Ptolome. For who knowes not that an heire apparant to a King or Emperour, shall in time possesse his fathers seate, if God preuent not ordinarie meanes, and that all other persons which conuey themselves from the line of Princes, are borne

(a) Gen 25, 26.

(b) Chrysost. in epi. ad Rom. Rom.

(c) Mala. 1. 2. Rom. 9. 13.

(d) Rom. 9. 7.

(e) Gene. 41. 15.



### *A defensatiue against the poysen*

to great honour. The complement of sundrie qualities, imparteth dignitie (we graunt) to bodyes that by nature are vnperfect, but detracteth from those that are otherwise, and therefore albeit in the time of Moses, God appointed a peculiar meane to purge and scoure away perticular misdeedes, yet Christ extending a more vniuersall benefite of his most precious death, to all that constantlie beleue in him, hath left the same as a perfect salue and expiation for all offences.

We doo not thinke the heauens to be blew or redde, because the lyght which commeth thence, discerries those colours vpon earth, no more may we suppose the Planets to be passionate, because they kinde diuerse qualities in bodyes which are apt to alter. If then the Planets profite and make ripe the bodies, vpon which they spread their beames, without infusing any grace or mallice of their owne: what reason lea- deth our Astrologers to grope for knowledge, which is no where to be found, or to make an Oracle of their owne imagination? Marrie (sayth one) we want not diuerse other helpes and complements to furnish out this stage, although so wide a breach were made in the perticulers of Planettes, as hath beene declared. And what are they in the name of God? Forsooth houses, signes, aspects, partes, images, fixed starres, and other things which make vp their audite. O braue Astrologers, it pitties me to see the peeuishnesse of wilfull men, who hauing foisted in one grosse absurditie, are glad to peece and clowte it vp with many more as rude, if not worse, in some regard to shunne the scorne and laughter of the learned. I should be verie loth to publish and disclose the childishe principles, whereon so many personnes of account haue built their emptie dreames: were it not that Agar wexeth proude against her dame, and Esopes dawne hath ietted vppe and downe so long, with admiration and applause of all the world, that many are ashamed now adayes to acknowledge and confesse, from howe many rauenous and spoyling birdes, she borrowed the painted plumes of her pride and vanitie. The labour would be verie long and great to rippe and can- uis all these matters, in as large an ample manner as they ought, but since the volume wexeth verie big, and I haue sundrie matters of more weight and moment to runne ouer, I will onely spend a warning peece or two against their paper walles, and leaue the batterie to greater or- dinaunce.

Fyrst, therefore let vs make our entrie by the houses Astrolo- gicall, wherevnto the writers attribute so much, as though the Pla- nets haue allowance at their hands of priuate qualities, yet are the same affirmed to be voide of all effect, vnlesse the planet bribe his harbinger to lodge him with a freend, and therefore not onely Iupiter (whome they admire for his benignitie) sometime wanteth a great part of his proper force: but in the third house is accounted neither good nor bad,  
and

*of supposed prophecies.*

and in the sixt vnfortunate, what would you more? They are content to graunt, *In loco malo bonum planetam nocere, in bono malum prodesse*, that a good Planet hurteth in a bad place, & a malignaunt freendeth in a place that is unhappy. Now would I vnderstand, from whence these diuine bodies should deriue theyr slippernesse and mutabilitie, which in respect of theyr most excellent and heauenlie forme and nature, ought of all other to be most fyrme and stable? It were a iest to thinke, that any man in this world should chaunge his qualitie in euery Inne, and therefore much lesse they which haue not in themselues *Principium mutationis*. We would make iollie sport at any vaine Philosophers, that durst eyther imagine or giue out, that a man which hath to deale in Cheape-side, or Lumbardstreete, should be disposed and inclined earnestlie, to become a Mercer whyle he were in a Mercers shop, a Goldsmith in a Goldsmiths shop: and thus alter his intent and humor, according to the nature of the places, by the which he must be driuen to passe for dispatch of his businesse, and yet we dare conceyue more childishlie of bodies, that are further from the reach of sence, and nearer to the point of immortalitie.

Beside, if a Starre be but the thickest part of her owne sphere, I can not finde, howe one of these should challenge so great interest aboue another, and looke by how much that which shineth, is more excellent then that which shineth not, and that which wee discern before that which we fancie, by so much ought wee to ascribe more vertue to the Planet which is bright and visible, then to the house which is obscure, and onely (as I thinke) imagined. But let them tell vs of what qualitie these houses are, of which they speake so much? For either they must be *Nuda spatia a corporibus separata*, emptie spaces deuided from the bodies, which can clayme no propertie because these followe, *Naturales formas non nudam in tercapedinem*, or they must be as Philosophie dooth teach, *Vltime corporis ambientis superficies*, in which none other qualitie can be, then is in *Corpore ambiente*: and therefore let them giue an instaunce of those bodies, whose extremest part or skyrt is a receptacle or a lodge for Planettes. I am sure those houses runne about the world, and therefore as they chaunge theyr properties according to theyr site: so must they swerue exceedingly, that alwaye make account of one effect or qualitie, whether in Oriente or in occidente, &c. There remayneth then no roome for houses, but in Immobile interuallo, which neyther Aristotle nor his schollers wyll digest, or though we should acknowledge such a space, it followes not that it worke those properties which our Astrologers imagine. Some of the wisest of that crew finding theyr owne error, and the manifold absurdities that would ensue yppon this supposition, haue laboured to salue the matter with a new conceyte, that the Planets chaunge and vary



## *A defensative against the poyson*

their owne beames according to their sight. Which no man wyll refuse to graunt, so that by change they meane intention & remission, that is, working with more force & strength at one tyme then another: but to suppose that Planets change their natures with their place, & making a man rich and honorable in one degree, make him poore and subiect to dishonor & disgrace in another, may be scored vp among those *spanische* *muys* olde wiues fables, which S. Paule reprooueth in his rules to Timothy. For whether the sunne be perpendicular or oblique, he worketh euer one effect, though not at all tymes, with like force and vertue.

Signes.

Origen in  
Leuit.

Touching signes, wee haue to vnderstand, that because Astronomers for ease in numbering, deuided the circle into twelue speciall partes, Astrologers come after and deuide euery signe into thirty degrees, euery degree into three score particles: and yet not satisfied with all these toyes, which no philosophy doth teach (to make their art more obscure & difficult) they fall to attribute perticular effects first to euery degree, and then to euery particle, supposing some of them to be darke, other cleare, some dedicated to Sol, other to Mars, some well affected to this Planet or that, others professed enemies, some fauourable, some vnfortunate, as if the first original of this diuision of the circle, had proceeded rather fro the course of nature then the liking of Astronomers: who (as I sayde before) without conceit of any property in degrees or parts, deuised this short meane for their owne aduantage, wherupon, Abraham Auenazra one of their best doctors, yeeldeth so far as to make the deuision of it selfe indifferent. Ptolome, with all the schoole of Egypt, neuer thought that these signes had any solide or firme nature wherein to consist, and therefore Origen, who was best acquainted with those matters, writeth, that the signs are *Mente tantū intelligibilia*, only to be conceiued in the minde, &c. For since there is no certaine part of the 8. sphere deputed to this speciall vse, that in the same, either æquinoctium or solsticiū should be euer made: but sometime one part serues the turne, sometimes another, *Hac puncta sunt re ipsa nulla*, these pointes are none in very deede, and therefore though the learned in the Mathematics, might plotte out with their pen these signes as helps to arte: yet maketh this no more then a tale of Robin-hood, for the properties of signes, which ought to be conceiued & regarded in natiuities. The Chaldeis finding this as it should seeme, excluded them quite from their art, and cheefly made account of images, which prooues their reasons to be very weake, that thinke the Planettes to retaine as strong a smacke and saueur of the Zodiacke, as heartbs of a garden: for one receyueth nourishment, so doth not another, the plants or roots are fixed in the ground, the Planettes so farre apart from the Zodiacke, as a citizen of London might as well smell the perfumes of Paris, as these communicate or impart their qualities, sauing that to relecue this exigent they haue found out a new deuise, that forsooth two places in one signe, (though

### *of supposed prophecies.*

(though they be somewhat further off) are allyed more neerely then those that (hauing place in sundry signes) confine and border one vpon another. For why (say they) dooth the sunne in Leo worke with more effect then in other places, if there be no vertue in the signe? Forsooth, because his beames doo more directlie strike vs from that place, for if the signe it selfe beare any stroke in this, then should the sunne in Leo spread his beames, with one kind of effect and force ouer all the world, which experience dooth teach to be farre otherwise, for looke at what tyme regions sited to the North, are parched and infested with the feruent heate of this constellation, the South is foud to freeze, and againe, beeing sited in Aquarius, at which tyme we see nothing else but yse & snowe, &c. he parcheth in the South, &c. The sunne in Aries, teares of the grissie maske of winter and renews the world: how so? by vertue of the signe? Nothing lesse, but by drawing neerer to these partes, and reuiuing (in a sort) his olde acquaintaunce with the world, which was discontinued and intermitted with his absence. For if this signe had any greater force, in respect it is an exaltation of the sunne: how could he worke the same effect in all degrees, out of the signe of Libra which is opposite to Aries, among those, which as Lactantius sayes, *Aduersa nobis vrgent vestigia*? Thus we confesse the Rāme, to be *Signum suscitans tonitrua, pluuias, &c.* causing thunder, rayne, &c. Not in respect of any qualitie proceeding from the signe to this effect: but because the sunne approching to the Rāme, dissolueth first the moisture of the winter with a gentle heate, and after gathering and growing on to greater strength, drawes vp that store of matter whereof the rayne and thunder is engendred. For further prooffe heerof we are to note, that the sunne is alwayes most hotte and feruent in Cancer, though the same be neyther his house nor his exaltation, and which is more, not a fyrie signe but a waterishe, and therefore we may with reason referre distempers and perticular diseases to the ground, in respect they wayte not on the signe, but on the season. Touching the manifold & endlesse controuersies and alterations, amōg Astrolōgers themselues vpon diuerse points, as namelie, whether the signe giue vertue to the Planet, or the Planet to the signe, whether the signes deriue any qualitie from images and such lyke: I wyll not speake tyll I be prouoked by some other meane, because I rather chuse to ouer-slip aduantage in abridging prooffe, then to offend by stretching or enlarging poyntes, which are more incident to the matter, then requisite for satisfaction. This is inough for a taste of true philosophie concerning sygnes; & for the rest, I doubt not of their priuate iudgement, in disclosing and disciphering the grosse packe of abuse, which eyther are enabled by light of reason, to discerne a fancie from a trueth, or haue beene taught by Logicke, to distinguish the things which are atchieued by themselues, from others that are brought to passe by accident.

Theyr



### *A defensatime against the poyson*

Aspects.

**T**Heyr phantasticall conceites about aspects of Planettes, eyther fauourable and luckie, or vnkinde, and therewithall vnfortunate, are sufficientlie shaken by this certaine ground of true philosophy, that the disposition of diuerse causes tending to one certaine ende, cannot forgoe their vertue by meere distaunce onely. Let them bring one instaunce against this out of all Aristotle, and I wyll deale no further in the matter. If the schoole of naturall Philosophers and learned men, confine the rage of passions and affections to the regiment beneath the Moone, and Iob assures vs, *Fecisse Deum pacem in excelcis suis*; that God made peace and amitie among the supream bodies, how can they feigne so many battelles and conflicts, eyther among the gods themselves or betweene their beames, as that verse of Ouid may no lesse agree with vs, then with the Painimes.

*Mulciber in Troiam pro Troia stabat Apollo.*

And the fortune of a common-wealth, shall seeme wholie to depend vpon the fauour of a Planet. The celestiall bodies, can neyther proffer wrong, nor suffer any thing if it be not for theyr good, as the Moone receyueth lyght from the Sunne, to her owne perfection and increase of maiestie. Beside, there is no dreaming of conflict without concluding a decaye, because the second alwayes followes and ensues vpon the first, but nothing that hath eyther place or course about the Moone can Interire, therefore it is not possible for any such conflicts or ouerthwarts to be among the Planettes, as haue beene supposed, moreouer, if theyr formall regardes of Quadrat, trianguler, sextile, oro, opposite, were able by proportion to alter properties of beames, then might they likewise chaunge the nature of the bodies, from which those beames doo come because the vertue of the beame can haue none other head, then a Corpore irradiante, which were too great an errour to be imagined. Why should Iupiter in Cancer, communicate no qualities with Mars in the signe of Leo, which are neighbour signes? Whereas we make them ioigne their beames in verie gracious and freendly manner, after Mars hath been remoued further off into Virgo with a wider distance, since this principle cannot bee denied, that, whatsoeuer woorketh by meane of influence into any other kinde of thing, *Quanto proximius est patienti, tanto agere efficacius*, the neerer it is to the same, with the more effect and strength it workes, so that albeit distaunce or neere neighbourhood may diminishe or increase the qualitie: yet can it not corrupt or alter it. But put the case we should admitte the passion betweene the beames, for the compasing of which they fetch about so many giddy turnes: I hope they will not otherwise demaund the same, then with their old prouiso, *Vt minus nobilia patiantur a nobilioribus*, which cannot any whit auayle or further theyr conceytes, considering they frame theyr plottes in so straunge a sort, as Sol the prince of Pla-

ners

*of supposed prophecies.*

nettes, vnto whome Philosophers ascribe more glorie then to all the rest, is not onelie greued but infected, and oftentimes sore wounded by the mallice of a rebell. The consideration of aspectes, depends vpon a true dimension and diuision of the heauen into certayne lymittes or confines, by which one Planer is deuied from another. Therefore 180. parts in distaunce make an opposite aspect, because the same redoubled makes vppe the full number, lykewise the trine by triplication, and so fourth in ceteris. If then this figure or proportion, conferre so strong a vertue for this cause, why giue they not the lyke allowance betweene the number of 42. and lykewise of 45. degrees, whereof one multiplied fise tymes, another eight, arriueth to the selfe-same periode? Marry (say they) because another secrete lurketh in the obseruation, for that the trine quadruple and sextile aspect by multiplication, comprise as wel the number of the signes also, &c.

O strange Philosophy, who can deride the coniurers of Egypt, which wrought all thinges by fractions of Arithmeticke, and blinde characters of theyr owne deuise: when in our dayes some blush not, to face out more grosse deceyte with lesse probabilitie? For my part, I can conceyue no reason, why we might not as well to contriue and warrant an aspect within thyrty partes, because the same conteyne no lesse the double edged mysterie whereof they speake, then those other that haue beene accepted by theyr lyking, & selected by theyr dilligēce. And thus we slide into that grosse absurditie (which Aristotle reprooueth, & not without great cause) of scanning qualities which are naturall and annexed vnto bodies, by demonstrations which are Mathematicall and abstracted from the subiect. Theyr other argument of comming out of signes, Eiusdem generis, because the Planets cannot possiblie regard one another with a sextyle or a trine aspect: but they must be both eyther in a masculine or a female signe, is not woorthy the repeating. For let them shewe some reason, why these lookes alone, should breede a streighter lincke of kindred betweene Planets in respect of place, then nature dooth betweene twinnes, which are engendred not by the looke or sinel, lyke the colts of A rabie (if Plinie write no more then may be warranted for trueth) but of the substance of the selfe-same parentes, & are conceiued in one moment, whereas notwithstanding, our own experience doth daily teach, that these differre no lesse then white and black, then good and badde, then Esau and Iacob, then Hercules and Amphitrio. But if onely the children of this world marrie, whereas they that shall be counted woorthy of the lyfe to come, and rising from the dead, doo neither marrie nor are married, but shall be lyke to Angelles. &c. Why should wee fayne a masculine or feminine propertie in heauen, where neyther it hath vse nor ende? And if among those which haue put on Christe in this world, (as S. Paule sayes) there is neither respect

Luk. 10. 35.

Gala. 3. 28.

Qi.

of



### *A defensatiue against the poyson*

of Iewe or Greeke, of male or female, much lesse in the spheres aboue, where neyther carnall operations, nor concupiscence hath any roote, nor the signes lyke blocke-houses can be sayde, to harbour or bestowe such forcible or defectiue qualities. But marke how well they prooue their concord and agreement in aspect, by comming out of signes eiusdem generis, for by the same proportion I wyll vndertake to prooue, the lookes, which are most ouerthwart and opposite, to be as fortunate and luckie as the rest, because bothe Aries and Libra, Cancer and Capricorne, are signes eiusdem generis, and so are all the rest, whose regards are opposite. Moreouer Ptolome prooueth in his third booke, that not the sextile onely which is good, but the quadrate which is malignant, aunswer one another oftentimes, out of signes that are not only of one kinde, but likewise of one qualitie: whereas on the other side, the Planets which are in signes of diuerse and repugnant kinds, regard not one another with a quadrate or an opposite aspect at all tymes, as some thinke, but sometime with a sextile in the greatest fauour as appeareth. They vouch another prooffe out of analogy with musick, where the base accordeth better with the treble, then with any string between, as if the dreame of harmonies in heauen, which hath beene quite forgotten euer since the date of Pithagoras, should be reuiued for a colour of this paradoxe: and yet he drew this fiction with greater probabilitie from spheres, which in respect one lyes aboue another, maye be compared better to the stringes of instrumentes, then signes which vouchsafe not any way so fitte and apt a figure, to the countenauncing of so friuolous a fancie. Diuerse haue been verie dilligent and inquisitiue, in finding out the right and perfect ground, from whence these fancies of aspects were taken, but in mine owne conceite, the fundrie shapes and figures of the Moone, according to the lymits of her approaching or retyring from the sunne (who lendes her lyght) induced diuerse to presume the lyke of other Planets among themselves: and I beleue this gesse so much the rather to be true, because the lookes which are supposed among Planettes, by the writers in that arte, doo so fitly sute and aunswere those which are ascribed to the Moone, bothe in number and in qualitie.

Partes.

I Neede not stand vppon the confutation of those dreames, which are deuised about partes of Planettes, by any other ground, then they owne aucthoritie which were inuenteres of the fable. For Hermes neuer gaue them so great credite in prefiguring euentes of thinges, as by inueterate error (which some that speake more mannerlie call custome) they haue since those dayes obtained. Againe, Ptolome the arche  
Astro-

## *of supposed prophecies.*

Astrologer promising to deliuer his instructions & rules, *μη δὴ κληρὸν καὶ ἀριθμὸν ἀνατιθεῖν*, not by partes and numbers voide of any perfect reason or effect: and againe, vainely deuised by sundrie men, *καὶ μὴ πῖθον ἔχοντα λόγον*, and hauing no perswasue or pithie reason to induce themselues, declare his weake conceyte and iudgement, of these ryckle proppes and supporters of astrologie. For straunge it were, that distaunce should doo more then neighbourhoode, and that the ascendent should worke more by dimention then by influence. But not content heerewith, as if there were no stint of olde-wiues tales, they suppose and fancie sundrie meetings and concourses of the starres, In species imaginum, in the fourmes of images, ascribing to the same, the properties of thinges which they seeme to resemble in theyr Kalender.

Wherevpon, Auenazra one of the best learned of that crew, can finde none other cause, why Ptolome should call that figure Lyræ a harpe, which we call Vulturem cadentem a falling Vulture, sauing that euerie man (sayth he) may as well chaunge the name in vse, as he hath altered the figure in imagination. Nam quemadmodum aliæ alijs stellis pro oculorum arbitrio coniunguntur, ita diuersæ sunt imagines, for as Starres seeme to be matched or combined, according to the iudgement of our eye, so we conceyue the figures. As if a man would prophecie, that such a shower of rayne would bring forth Lyons, and such another citties, &c. because the cloudes which let them fall, represented such a kinde of image. For to saye that Starres haue greater force in bringing theyr proportions to passe, and leauing the print and stampe in nature, is but a begging of the question, which we call petitionem principij, vntyll they prooue their maximes, cyther by more pregnant reason, or more sound aucthoritie.

Beside the body of the sphere being rounde, maketh this conceyte more arbitrarie to the lookers on, for styll it shall be lawfull, cyther by taking in, or leauing out some Starres, to cast what shape it lyketh them, in the moulde of fancie. I wyll not take aduauntage by the Chaldeis, who confounding Scorpio and Libra in one masse, could not be induced to admitte more images then eleuen, nor that the best aucthoritie that can bee vouched for theyr defence, is taken out of Aratus, fyrst a Poet, who by custome hath obteyned lybertie to gloze, and then, as Cicero confesseth, altogether ignoraunt in matters which hee takes in hande to write: but I maye probable coniecture, that if GOD (at the fyrst establishment and publication of his legall ceremonies among the Iewes) appoynted none other images in the seate of Mercie, then two Cherubines, and those Exod. 25. 18.  
Respicientes se inuicem, regarding one another, &c.

Qui.

It

38.7.



### *A defensatiue against the payson*

It is not lyke that he would garnishe and idorne his seate of maiestie, with images of Lions, Tygers, Beares, & sometime of monsters also, as Centaurus and such lyke, warring and contending without end among themselues. Wherevpon it falleth out, that strife, which nature shunneth and detesteth in this corruptible world, is marshalled among the starres for a greater ornament.

But looke with what authoritie the learned in Astrology presume, to cast the Stars into so many shapes, the Rabbines of the Iewes are not ashamed also to deriue their alphabet fro thence, as if without a most vn sensible vntruth, or rather a maine swarme of lies: we could neither find an Astrolabe in Egypt, nor Orthographie in Palestine. *Arbitrio enim figura sunt, actu nihil.* For in conceyt, sayth Bonauenture, they are figures, but in verie deede they are nothing. Diuers seeme to woonder, what should fyrst encourage men to fayne these toyes: but for myne part I conceyue with Erasmus, that the fourmes of images were fyrst deriued from similitude or correspondence, in effectes which the sunne worketh in those places. Thus Aries is called so, because the sunne arriuing in that poynt, cloatheth the soyle with a new fleefe, and soketh vp the moysture of the winter. Taurus, because the season is most fitte to manure the ground. Aquarius and Pisces, water all the world with rayne. Scorpio beginnes to pricke with colde. Sagittarius, to shoote vs through with the frosen darte. In Capricorne, the sunne beginnes to skip and leape againe lyke a goate. Libra peyzeth the daies and nights in equall ballaunce. Leo takes his name of strength and feruent heate. Virgo of sterilitie, which are caused by the sunne, repaying to those places.

Now let the reasonable iudge, whether it be lyke that these supposed images, which (as I haue sayd before) haue none other fourme then fancie dooth assigne, should eyther giue a qualitie, or alter that which Sol himselfe (from whome they drawe theyr figure by similitude) imparteth to the subiect. Is it not inough for husbandmen, to take notice of the fittest times and seasons of the yeere, wherein to plie their labour, by these bright and blasing signes, without Astrologers should adde the properties of brutish beastes, to worke in vs by nature, what is not in themselues but by imagination? Beware of building vnder Scorpio (saye they) least thy lodgings be infested with toades, snakes, and such lyke vermine, as by nature are most venomous. Again, they teach that Phisicke is vnholosome, so long as the Moone is in Tauro: because as Bulles chaw cud, so wyll he cause thee to cast vp thy medicine. To those that are borne vnder Corona when it ryseth, they promise a kingdome, vnder Lyra a fiddle, wherevpon these straunge absurdities ensue, that fyrst our fortune hangeth on the iudgement of our eye. Secondly, we know not what to trust, because all eyes discern not fourmes alyke, but  
change

*of supposed prophecies.*

chaunge according to the gliins of phantasie. Thirdly, it is quit without the compasse of all reasonable rules, that euerie thing should haue the proprietie or vertue of another, which it seemeth to resemble in externall shape, and last of all, although we should allowe their fourmes and images according to the plots, or rather shaddowes of their bare conceyte: yet were it not exceeding straunge that Taurus in the sphere, should effect and distribute the qualities of Taurus in the pasture? Wel, let vs beare with this generallitie of images, because they ground the same vpon the figure of a multitude of Starres, concurring formally (if you beleue their aymes) In speciem imaginis: what bring they for those images, which are supposed to consist in the front or face of euerie signe, and that with such diuersitie of toyes, as a man that readerth and peruseth their vn sensible conceytes, would thinke he walked all the while in a world of antickes.

In the face of Cancer, they paynt out a young man well apparelled, his shape betweene a horse and an Elephant, &c. In the face of Leo, a tree with a deepe roote, and a dogge couched on the braunch thereof. Some place a fayre woman in the face of Aries, others a blacke a Moore. Some saye there is a golden pype in the face of Gemini, a barking dogge and a Dolphin, others a young man desiring to be put into complete armour. To the third face of Scorpio, the Arabians ascribe a Horse and a Hare, the Indians a wylde Bore and a Libarde, others a man vpon his knees, which is most probable of all the rest, making sute to GOD, as I suppose, in the behalfe of all Astrologers, that they may once againe be restored to theyr senses. I leaue out many more, the tedious discourse of which, would not cause so many men to smile, as to cast vp theyr stomackes. The Egyptians, Chaldeans, old Greeks, and olde Latines, were altogether voide of any knowledge of these images in faces, which condemneth Halie ten times more, for fathering the same vpon the groundes of Ptoleme, for where he teacheth, *τα παρὰ πολλοῖς ἐν ἀστρολογίᾳ τῶν ἀντικυρίων τῶν ἀντικυρίων* &c. He meaneth onelie figures of the beastes, ascribed to the signes and fixed Starres, but seemeth not in any place to take knowledge of the other. Some that are ashamed of the rude and harsh report of such vaine toyes, haue gone about to qualifie the same, by noting that diuersitie of straunge effectes, are rather paynted out, then such images indeede comprised in the face, &c. Whereas the deepest and profoundest Doctors of theyr facultie defend, Verissimas imagines contineri, that most true and liuely images are conteyned in the same, and that they worke sometyme thinges sutable and correspondent to theyr outwarde fourmes, and sometymes greatly different, as appeareth by Albumazar.

But how should I beleue, theyr blinde antickes, when theyr eyes can see no further then mine owne, theyr Auethors are flatte Infidelles, ac-



### *A defensative against the poyson*

curssed by the mouth of God, theyr wittes but ordinarie and like other menne, theyr iudgement ouer-cast with such a multytude of mystic clowdes, sent foorth from all the quarters and corners of the world, as it cannot possiblief put foorth the beames of perfect vnderstanding.

I could alledge a number of lyke toyes, without any ground of trueth or gesse of probabilitie, brought in to dazell and perplex the wittes of simple menne, whome they would make to woonder at theyr skyll, as bothe the head and taylor of the dragon, fortunes parte, which hath the fittest name and place of all the rest, because it is in verie deede the parte of nothing, &c. Whereas they leaue out many thinges of greater weight, and seeme to value them with verie slight regard, because they cannot reach the depth of theyr interpretation. For since we must beleue, that eyther there is not any kinde of influence at all in these shining bodyes, or if there be, according to the rate we must deuide the same among them all: what reason or aucthoritie can bee alledged, for the culling out the number of 1022. onely, from among the multitude of fixed Starres? as if not onely nature, which notwithstanding Philosophie would neuer graunt, but God himselfe her founder, had created any thing in vaine or to lyttle purpose.

But let vs see what shiftes they make to wpe away this blowe, which toppeth not the twigges or braunches of conceyte, but striketh at the verie balke of starre diuinitie. Petrus Apponenfis, one of the discreetest in that rancke, perceyuing what aduantage growes against him by this argument, confesseth in playne termes, that the greatest difficultie consisteth in this poynt alone: but notwithstanding, holdes it as a labour, that maye bee atchieued and ouercome with dilligence, Haly thought, that G O D himselfe eclipsed our presuming curiositie by this thicke clowde, least otherwise wee would haue aymed further then becomes mortalitie. But howe dooth eyther of theyr aunsweres warde the stroke, when bothe acknowledge that to be most infinite, which they would couch within the compasse of an Astrolabe. Another finding this flatte instaunce in the former strength, deuiserh to dispatch the same by setting downe this principle, that onely the greater lyghtes ought to be scanned and regarded in the iudgement of great matters, and that there is small effect in the lesser: *Idque propter corporum exiguitatem*, and that for the smalnesse of the bodyes, as if they could deeme or descant of theyr vertue, when they neuer vnderstoode whether any were in them or not: as if the least of all those fixed Starres which they regarde so lyttle, were not bigger then eyther Mars or Venus, whome they magnifie so much, or as if the smallest Starre could bee counted lyttle, in respect of any thing beneath the Moone, or of all the world together.

But

### *of supposed prophecies.*

But first I craue it maye be noted, howe much they stande beholding to theyr olde freend Ptolome concerning this one poynt, who allowing to the Planettes ordinarie lucke, affoordeth to the fire Starres more happinesse then maye be imagined. Regiomontanus in lyke sort, with other of that side, preferre the properties of fixed Starres, in respect they are not Fugaces & momentaneæ, sed stabiles & perpetuæ: but I passe them ouer. Againe, suppose that euerie single Starre could worke great effect, what maketh this against the meeting and concourse of many? For whereas many handes make vppe one full and perfecte strength, the leauing out or missing of the least diminisheth the stresse, where many voices make a sweete consort, we cannot leaue out any without want, and where many simples are compounded in a medicine, for the helping or correcting of that excellence or predominaunce which is proper vnto euerie one, the smallest errour breedeth a great inconuenience.

Bonatus seeketh to escape at another loope, affirming all the Starres to be considered and vsed by Astrologers, although they cannot name them, all in respect the signes are vsed, &c. for whensoever any Starre is coextended vnto any signe, within the selfe-same lynes he prooueth it to worke, according to the vertue of the signe it selfe, without respect or mixture of his proper influence. In deede this might suffice, if he could, prooue that fixed Starres deriued properties from signes, &c. But styll mee thinkes, in flourishing the fonde conceytes of error, with the colours of pretended skyll: the partie leuelles with lyke ayme (for all the world) as if I should vndertake to tell what is doone in Calecute, or in those citties of the Moone, which Lucian describeth in his Dialogues. Therefore beeing guiltie to himselfe and in his priuate conscience, as I conceyue, of a verie friuolous and impertinent imagination: he demaundeth to lyke purpose, though with greater probabilitie why they may not as well discourse of bodyes, whose perticular effects they cannot reach, as diuines are wont to preach of them, and yet for all that vnderstand as lyttle.

To this I aunswere, that there is a difference betweene admiring and commending them as workes of GOD, and making them the causes or discouerors of future accidentes. The fyrst is free for any that dependeth on the prouidence of GOD, the second fitte for none that are but dust and ashes. Againe, I graunt that he, which seeketh onelye to vnderstande the nature of the Starres, as well as of the simples in the fiede, maye be sayde to vnderstande in some degree, though he bee not exquisite and perfect in them all: but if a man wyll eyther compounde a playster out of diuerse symples, or sette downe a constellation, which compriseth and conteyneth properties of sundrie Starres, because one maye resist or helpe, deminishe



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

2. Cor 12, 4.

or encrease, kindle or abate an other, without he knewe the meere perticulers of euery singuler, we neither can nor dare atfoord him vnderstanding in the generall. Now whither these perticulers are to be concerned, by the frayle capacity of mortall men or not, I referre it to the verdict of S. Paule, who reporting with great bashfulnesse and modesty the manner of his traunce, adioyneth onely thus much touchinge them, that he heard those secret wordes, *Quæ nemini fas est loqui*, which it is not lawfull for any mortall man to vtter: no doubt Astrologers would haue tolde vs many goodly tales, if euer they could haue attained to so fayre a colour of theyr strange imaginations.

Furthermore, against diuining touching accidents and euents to come, I may be bolde to vrge that maxime, which neyther learning or experience could euer hitherto controule, that is: *Entis per accidens nec esse, nec esse posse scientiam*, that neyther any certain knowledge is in deede, nor can be gathered of thinges which come to passe, not by the leuell of a certaine rule, but by the rouing of vncertaine accidents, or as the same Philosopher enlargeth his conceit more fully in an other place, it is not possible for any man aliue to descry the reason before hande, *An et cur*, whither or why so many diuers accidents as are requisite and needefull to the compassing of any strange effect, should eyther iustle and concurre together, or ensue successiue one in the necke of an other, considering how many lets may come betweene the cuppe and the lyppe, or a starre and a strawberye. For what soeuer is contingent, sayth Nemefius a learned byshop, is likewise ἀ-μετρον that is infinit, whatsoeuer is not circumscribed, is ἀγνοητον vnsearchable, and therefore all prophecies which challenge extraordinarye lyght, especially those that descant of natiuities, which Egypt προ των α-λλων προσβου ει respecteth and esteemeth aboue all the rest, are idle and impertinent.

It is an easie matter I confesse to deuine by causes, which by course of kind are lincked and combined to theyr determined, perticuler and infallible effects, what is lykest to betyde: but to gesse a far off at a matter, what shall come to passe by meane of diuers middle causes intercurring, which are loose, dislincked, and not any whit according to them selues, is as if a man woulde take vppon him, to discern by the light and sharpnes of his eye, what kynde of byrd a Merline straineth in her foote, when she mounteth almost out of sight, or by staring on the steeple of a parish church, to tell what kynd of people pray within the same, of what religiō, with what zeale, to what end, and with what ceremony, which strict and narrowe circumstances, being but conceiued in the priuate thoughts *ανυ αποδειξιων* without demonstrations, as all Philosophers confesse, can not be warraunted by certainty.

Gregory Nazianzen maketh no difference, betweene picking the  
knowledge

of supposed prophesies.

knowledge of Gods prouidence out of the starres, and seeking to descry the secreete counsailes of great Princes by the figures, flowers or devises, which are imbrodered vppon a Princes cloth or chayre of estate: for sooner shall we finde that which is frayle and to be founde in a seate of pompe, then that which is diuine and not to be discovered in a clowd of maiestie. Such loose, dislinkd and disseuered effects, as I mentioned before, may eyther *γινώσκαι ἢ μὴ γινώσκαι* be brought to passe or not, sayth Aristotle: because there is not any necessary cause (so far as) we are able to conceiue) in nature, that is able to enforce or dryue them to theyr issue.

This was the reason why Philosophers defined chaunce and fortune to be causes not by themselves, but by accident or happe, as when a man dyggyng for a mallowe roote, lightes vppon a peece of Golde: *Præter intentionem enim operantis eueniunt*, for they fall out quite beside the purpose or the meaning of the labourer. The Paynters alwayes paynte out fortune, eather standing on a rowlyng stone, which mooueth and remooueth still, but neuer gathers mosse, or wyth a sayle ouer head, which wayteth and attendeth vppon the chaunge of euery wynd, or sitting in her wheele, whose turnes are swifter then the thoughts of man: to set foorth fickle fauours by lyke termes of mutability. I will not say as Tullie did, *Non cadere in deum ipsum* &c. that it fell not to the share of God himselfe, to foresee the certaine prooffe of things to come, which require the meeting & concourse of diuers accidents: but this I dare affirme without chroching any iot vpon the power & strength of God, that man can iudge no further of euent to come, then the causes of the same are actually comprised in the thinges themselves, from which we take our ayme and deriue our knowledge. For example I will put some cases, that may make the poynt more euident.

A man that sees a Pomegranet tree, can tell what fruit it oughte to beare by kinde: but yet he cannot warrant or assure himselfe before the fruit be gathered (by gazing on the same) that it shall not bee shaken by some storme or other, blasted by some bitter winde, or consumed by the Caterpillar, we know not whom they shall restore or hynder, who shall eat them, or what effect they shall woorke in eating. I deny not but that potentially, all and euery one of these effects are enclosed in the proper cause: but after so diuine and darke a māner, as be cause *ἄλλοι ἄλλοιαι ἀναισθησιον αἶρας* dyuers wyndes may blow frō dyuers quarters, and in euery minute bring a chaunge, therefore we can resolue of nothing. Beside the will of man is mutable, accordyng to the meanes that are layd open to the same, and hath more tourninges in and out sometimes in one moment, then the labarinth which held the Minotaur. If I be not resolute vppon the course which I my selfe take within seuen dayes, can any man aliue descry myne inwarde thoughts, by



## *A defensatide against the poyson*

take within seauen dayes; can any man alius desery myne inwarde  
thoughtes, by casting vp the figure of a blinde natiuitie. Let euery  
man that thinkes himselfe to be most resolute, consider his owne  
steppes and call to minde, how often in the weeke he chaungeth his de-  
uise vppon a sudden chaunce, which was perhaps debated and determi-  
ned with leysure, or if they be not wylling to take all this payne, I leaue  
them to the Prophete Dauid, who confesseth that almost in the twink-  
ling of an eye, he found a kinde of forwardnesse & aptnesse in himselfe,  
to two seuerall courses that were flatlie contrarie, that is, *1. Re. 24. 11.* either to for-  
beare King Saule, or else to murder him. Godlie thoughtes and pur-  
poses procede from GOD, vcharitable fancies and deuises from the  
deuill, but neyther one nor other from the Planettes. Imagine that I  
meane and haue determined a voyage into Italie, vpon the waye a friend  
of mine encountering by chaunce, inuitheth mee for company to visite  
Coltine, during this warre-lyke preparation, bothe against and in de-  
fence of the Bishoppes. It chaunceth once to leese my purse in ryding  
thither ward, and comming fayre and softlie backe againe to seeke  
the same, I lyght into a packe of theecuts, which put my lyfe in desper-  
die: the question is, whether all these chaunges (without any tyne of  
consequence to leade vs from one hazard to another) can be printed  
or obserued in the figure of the constellation.

A woman washing of her childe by a riuers side, not farre from Lyre,  
chaunced to heare the suddaine crie of another childe of hers within,  
wherevpon running hastilie to see what was the cause, found that the  
lyttle infaut with a knife had wounded it selfe almost to death, and lay  
sprawling in the blond. The woman greatlie perplexed with this heavy  
chaunce, ranne backe to bring away the other which shee left behinde:  
but before her comming, it was drowned in the ryuer. In the meane  
tyme arriues the father of the chyl dren, who being styrr'd vpp and  
inflamed suddenlie by the force of nature, and supposing that it was not  
possible for these mishaps to chaunce so diuerselie, without some neg-  
ligence or follie in his wife: neuer gaue ouer beating tyll hee left her  
dead, & forthwith, as a man not able to withstād so violent a storme of  
care and kindlie greefe, cast himselfe headlong into the selfe-same wa-  
ter, wherein the second chylde was drowned, to make vp the tragedie.  
This is no fayned tale, but the true report of a thing in deede, by which  
we see, that one mishappe begatte another on a sodaine by such vnex-  
pected meanes, according to the course of second causes, neere about  
the place, and not of Planettes in the firmament: as no man that hath  
any sence wyll thinke, that either the first impulsue cause, or the meanes  
which afterward fell out, were reuealed by the figure of Astrologie.  
Imagine that a poore man leaueth many chyl dren, without releefe or  
maintenance to bring them vp, wherevpon a noble man meeting one  
of

of these begging in the streete, by chaunce (for charitie, together, with  
with a good conceyte of the countenaunce and pregnant answers of  
the childe) setteth him to schoole, from whence, after orderlie proceed-  
ding by degrees of learning, this poore orphane at the last is called to  
some honourable office in the common-wealth, or perhappes to the  
place of a Metropolitane. Now must we thinke, that at such tyme as the  
father left this childe as well as the rest in pouertie, neyther fortune, or  
rather prouidence of God, in causing him to meete with a noble man  
unlooked for, who was the meane of his preferment, could be foreseene  
by the Starres: because it rested not in them, but in the minde of the  
partie, whether he would goe that way or not, nor the meanes whereby  
it pleased God to raise him to that honour, because his patrone might  
as well haue set him to the keeping of a gosse-hawke, as to his booke,  
nor the end it selfe, because the Prince might haue elected others to that  
place if it had lyked him, nor any other instrument that ayded in this  
cause, although we should confesse the readinesse of witte to proceede  
from the Planets: for that the causes are too farre dislincked and disle-  
uered from theyr straunge effectes, and the chaunges wiche induce the  
fortune, too farre remoued and deuied from the reach of reason.

What man aliue could tell the French King, that a pigge running  
betweene the legges of his sonnes horse in an open streete, should  
cause the same to sling, tyll he throwe downe the Prince, who was  
so dangerously brused with the fall, that he deceased afterwards. Who  
could assure Don Sancho king of Nauarre, that a woman, letting his  
only childe and heyre apparaunt fell out of the windowe of a gallerie,  
should be an thour of so many bleeding tragedies as fell out in that  
countrie. What Prophet could haue picked out of Mars and Saturne, the  
manifold mishappes which befell that Prince of blessed memorie, King  
Henrie the sixt, whome I name for duties sake (in respect he was found-  
er of that woorthy Colledge in Cambridge, wherein I was brought vp)  
sometyme sleeping in a port of honour, sometyme floating in the surges  
of mishap, sometyme possessing forraine crownes, sometyme spoyled  
and depriued of his owne, sometyme a Prince, sometyme a prisoner,  
sometyme in plight to giue succour to the myserable, sometyme a  
fugitiue among the desperate.

I haue sayde inough before, howe farre the Planettes may be sayde  
to worke Per se, that is, to ryen and make perfect euerie liuing thing,  
according to the proper kinde and nature of it selfe, which Moses cal-  
leth *Secundum species suas*, touching other straunge euents, which draw  
theyr vertue, rather from the meanes that happen by the waye, then  
from the first intent, from fortune then fore-sight, and depending alto-  
gether vpon the meeting and concourse of diuerse accidents: are not  
so determinately bent to certayne endes, but they may be wrested, alte-

*of diuerse alterations of the*

Gen. 1.23.



### *A defensative against the poyson*

red and enterchaunged, by the meanes that come betweene, I holde them to bee brought to passe by chaunce altogether, in respect of vs, though God by providence dyrecte them as it seemeth best to him, for effecting of his holy purposes, otherwise it had not beene possible for Iason, giuing a thrust at the body of Phereus his enemy, with a mind, to kyll, to haue lanced an impostume, which without this thrust vndoubtedlie would haue made an ende of him. Against this some alledge, that as the carpenter may gesse at the goodnesse of the frame by knowledge of the tymber, so may we also at the course of thunges, by poring in the Planets: but mine answer is to this, that the members of comparison resemble not in any poynt, for the tymber is a cause materiall of that which shall be built, the Planets are not so of any thing that wee shall worke, the carpenter can iudge of the strength and season of the tymber, wherewith he resolues to builde, but Astrologers neither vnderstand the properties of all those Planets, which they take vpon them to knowe best, nor of a world of Statres beside, which because they can not marshall in their arte, they giue ouer and set out for ciphers, the carpenter conceiues according to the proper causes which doo sildome fayle, and we by shaddowes of our owne conceite which doo neuer followe. Last of all, no wyse man will suppose it to be halfe so easie, for vs to dispose the Planets after our owne wyll, as for him to square the tymber after his owne fancie: wherefore vntyll the carpenter can tell, not onely that the building wyll continew long which is not hard, but that it shall haue Lords of this or that degree, as tymes fall out, that it shall be subiect to this disease or that, that such men shall be borne, and such shall die within the same, that it shall be let for such a price to such a man at such a tyme, and put to such an vse: all other aymes and gesses are too weake and childish to support Astrologie.

Wherefore I conclude, that the knowledge which is drawne A causis remotissimis, as the Planettes is obscure, albeit we should graunt that there were such a thing, that which we borrowe a remotis, better then the first, but yet not so cleare that we may ground our selues vpon the same, as Sentinelles discover from their watch, that men approach vnto the walles by night, although they knowe not what they bee, &c. and that which is deriued a Propinquis, from the causes that are nere, and such as neuer fayle of theyr effect: Nisi natura impediatur, Vnlesse nature be empeached or enterrupped in her course, are to be regarded with assurance. It is one thing to presume, that in Autumne the sea wyll be rough, because the windes are lowde and boysterous about that tyme: and another to diuine, that such a Pinnesse freighted with such kindes of wares, shall perish then and in such a lybertie. I can prognosticate that humours beginne to styrre, and that agues are most ryse at the fall of the leafe: but that such a freend of mine about that tyme, should

*of supposed prophecies*

shoulde fall sicke of a feuer quartaine vppon the way to Norwiche, is more then art can discouer. They that are most ignorant, can gesse when they see a womans great with childe, of what kind the fruite shall be: but whithen it shall be one childe or more, a male or female, riche or poore, strong or weake, happy or vnfortunate, is onely open to the sight of God, whose knowledge is profound and infinite, wherefore yf we layle in matters which are subject to the sence, & haue theyr proper causes from our selues: what are we lyke to doo in matters, that are farte about the poynt of our Horizon.

It were expedient for him that would prognosticate in this straunge manner, to conuert each seuerall effect with his proper cause, which because we are not able to perforce in respect of imbecillity and frailty of our mortall kinde, therefore it were an oversight to thinke, that the planets can deliuer any thing whereof we may rest assured. What should I speake of the burning strife, and irreconcilable debate of Astrologers among themselves, in matters of the greatest weight, which of necessity must proceede eyther from excesss of pryde, default of learning, vncertainty of principles, or want of pithy reasons to defende the matter. For as they stand in greatest neede of a retentiu and assured memory, which are giuen to lye: so men that builde vppon no surer ground then theyr owne coniecture, and establish art vppon the props of wil, can not agree together: because the latter wyters haue as good authority to change, as the former to inuent, these to foyst in fancies of they own, as those to scorne the lessons of theyr elders, in so much as Cato meruailed, and in my iudgement not without great cause, howe one Astrologer coulde looke an other in the face without smilinge.

Plato comming nearest to the trueth it selfe, defendeth Omnes planetas esse beneficos; that all the planets are beneuolent and kynde, according to that ground of Moyles, Vidit Deus cuncta quae fecit, et erant valde bona. God sawe all thinges which he had created, and they were exceeding good &c. Against this rule, our planetaries findyng that without malignaunt properties in starres and planets their kingdome can not stande, ascribe deccite to Mercury, wantonnesse to Venus fury to Mars, inconstancy to the Moone &c. Obiecting out of Iulian the runnagate, agaynst whom S. Cirill wryteth very learnedly, that the rule of Moyles ought not to be so generally vnderstroode: for whereas Serpents, Cockatrice, and such venemous and offensiu beastes are to be found, all thinges can not be counted valde bona, as though wee were not as much bounde to God for those thinges which are left for exercise of vertue, as for encrease of benefite, for he that contendeth can not obteyne the prize, till he haue contended orderly, and as it was reuealed to S. Paule in an other place, the grace of God suffyseth vnto all, *inquit dominus propter me virtutem* for my vertue, sayth he, is made perfect in infirmity.

Gen. 1. 31,

2. Tim. 2. 13,

2. Cor. 12. 9.  
Ex. 8. 11,

R. 3.

The



## A defensatune against the poyson

Ex. 15, 4.

Psal. 135, 13

Tob. 6, 6.

Act. 28, 6.

The Froggess and Grasshoppers lya here so much that in Egypt by the spoyle of glayne, as good by publishing the mighty power of God, the red sea can not be so much reproved for ouerwhelming a malne hoste of infidels, as for obedience vnto the worde of him that created it of nothing. The fish releued young Tobie more with the vertue of hys lyner, then he feared him with the terror of his coming. The Viper which crept vpon the hande of Paule, preuailed not so much in putting hym to payne, as in turning others to repentance: wherefore since both these and other thinges are not as they seeme, but as it pleaseth God to vse them to his glory or to our offence, the rule of Genesis can not be shaken by the blast of infidelity. But though this argument of Iulian were of effect, it prouoeth not the mallice of the Planets; for albeit that cursed curse of God, depriued all this earth of her fertilitye in bringing forth, without the sweat of Adam and his offspring; yet I finde not that it stretched to the stars; nor that any thing about the Moone was altered or changed, in respect of Adams fault from the first perfection, and therefore as S<sup>r</sup> Ierome wyres, *Fracta nati de meritis disputant*; they caull about the freight when the shippe is broken.

Well to goe forward, our Astrologers contend about the motions of all the Planets, each of the sonne it selfe, which notwithstanding is most euident of all the rest, and by whom alone (if any trueth or certainty were in theyr art) we should possesse at others; well, they say, they skilleth not then; note the grosse absurdity that followes, and for since together, with the change of that part of the signe wherein the planets are, the boundes which they call fines; and vnto which some attribute no lesse vertue and effect then to the houses themselves; and some times the exaltations are in lyke manner altered: in falseth out, that what should light in Tauro, which is a lucky signe, shalthe out in Gemini, which is vnfurnat. Now when the place is exchanged alters the degree, the degree, the minute, and every minute hath a severall effect; the doctors straining about enery one of these: I would knowe by what meane any man aliue can prescribe of certainty.

Ptoleme findeth great fault with the rules of Egypt, from whence others draw theyr principles. Agayne, Chaldea dissenteth from Egypt Persia from both, Arabia from all; and all of them from truth; every country vouching for all this theyr owne order and peticuler experience. If theyther are their quarrels light but of great moment; and touching the very substance of the faculty Auenazra placeth Sol, Venus & Mercury in one sphere, the rest are agaynst him. Some thinke that wher the Planets are vnder earth, because they cast no beames, whyche are vehicula virtutis as Haly calleth them; therefore they can send forth no kynde of influence; others hold the to be strongest and most might

ty in those places; & dyuers of theyr wysethynke, that the Planets  
 worke with strongest and most forcible effect, when they rest in theyr  
 altitude, but when they drawe neere to vs, because they are at that  
 same naturall cognation, more neere of kinde to nature, I finde one of  
 the best among them perswaded altogether, that no wicked lawes, or  
 qualitties descende from heauen, but onely good, as if he were inhibited  
 by a certaine scrupulosity of conscience, to charge those heauily bo-  
 dyes with so many many mischeuous and wicked partes, as are impu-  
 sed by the subtilty: all the rest are banded in the field against him, as  
 an enemy to theyr common profit.

Moreover, it is not yet resolved in theyr consistory, which is the  
 greatest conjunction, which is the meane, nor which is the leaste: al-  
 though those be the groundes from whence they drawe theyr cheefest  
 poynts of diuination. The Chaldes respect the planets onely in theyr  
 altitude, without regard cyther of signes or houses, the Latines and  
 Arabians deale otherwise. Ptolome neglecteth wholly the Decanes, the  
 Indians and Egyptians deuide them diuersly. The Arabians under-  
 stande not what is meant by *parapsychia* they are laughed at in Greece,  
 and yet vsed in all Egypt. Some referre the signes to the eyght, others  
 to the ninth sphere, not one of them almost agrees with an other about  
 the partes: for hauing lost theyr way, like pilgrimes in a woode, the  
 more they stryue to finde a newe, the further they digresse from pro-  
 babilitee.

I coulede deuise to tyre a world of readers, with disclosing the leaste  
 parte of theyr braules and bickeringes, about houses, signes, signifi-  
 cations, properties, quantities continuall, and discret diuersity in num-  
 bring about Ptolomes rule of Animodar: with a swarme of such lyke  
 toyes, as not in those dayes onely, but euen in this age yllewe from the  
 pennes of the Germaine wyters, leauing theyr discourtes against other  
 men that went before, as a subiect, no lesse worthy of reproofe, by the  
 censur of the learned which come after. They warre not about any  
 poynt more mortally, then the properties of planets and theyr seuerall  
 effects in vs: and yet theyr owne best authors are enforced to confesse,  
 that the men which in our time haue beene mooste famous both for  
 witte and courage, were borne ynder Saturne and Venus. But since they  
 bragge so much of knowledge in natiuities, I would be glad to learne  
 by some of them at their fittest leisure, whither touching things which  
 are not clowted vpp at once, but persited by degrees of distance, wee  
 should deuine accordyng to that minur as the fatal tyme, wherein the  
 woorke is first conceyued and deuised in our thought, of whatsoever  
 kynd or qualitty the workeman be: or else when it is begonne, or  
 when the whole is persited, or when not all but part of it, Sunt enim et  
 partium fata diuersa, for partes as well as integalles haue theyr sun-  
 dry



## A defensatime against the poyson

any destinies. Some thinke it were most sure to iudge by the first attempt, and so much tyme is saved also by that meane: because if good successe be granted and allotted to the workmans hand, when he begins, the ende, which is the losse both of the workman and the worke, must needes be futable.

Beside, wee can not gesse more probablye what is entended by the starres, then when they worke together with the middle causes: so that according to this rule, the tyme wherein the childe is first begotten ought to be considered. For prooffe hereof we reade in Ptolome, that so often as we can assure our selues of the certaine time, wherein the child is first conceived in the mothers wombe, (which none may better doo (sayth Haly) then they that seldome know theyr wyues) it is a surer way to iudge, because the child receiueth an impression of that influence which descendeth from the planets in the present time, & though the same may chaunge and alter somewhat afterwarde, as diuers accidents fall out, yet since it taketh (for the most part) qualities which are of kynde, and futable to those which were imprinted first, wee regarde those about others.

But least by these words, Ptolome shoulde vtterly disgrace the gesses which are made vpon the birth, he addeth afterward, that notwithstanding they must necessarily depende vpon the byrth: Qui horam principij seminalis ignorat, that can not finde out the howre of conception &c. Onely this difference I note, that speaking of the first tyme, hee useth the greeke woorde *apronian*, that it is conuenient or requisite in the second *enaynion* as if there were none other remedy, and which is more, he warranteth the constellation of birth no further, then it firreth and accordeth with the former.

If we list to come neerer to the first originall of man, for my parte, I can see no reason why the maisters of Astrology, which are not ashamed to suppose, that the constellation of the present time wherein any question is propounded vnto them, eyther touching thinges to come or already past, is euer in a readinesse to assoile or satisfie the same, ascribing in a sort the course of prouidence to the scope and purpose of our variable will: should not much rather gesse the fortune of the chylde by the tyme, wherein the parents first consent to ioyne themselves together. If this proportion lyke them not, yet since themselves assure vs, that the planets haue a proper and peculiar interest, in certaine partes and members of the body more then others, as the Sunne and Moone in the eyes &c. and besides we find by prooffe, that the liuer is affected well when the head dooth ake, the lounge are sound when the spleene is otherwise, which proueth (in a sort) that euery part is rated by a feuerall and priuate destiny within it selfe, without regard vnto the whole: there were great reason (in my iudgement) to conceyue, that they which will be

*of supposed prophecies.*

be perfect in the generall, should vnderstand the measure of the partes (of the brayne and heart, especially from which the senses take theyr strength) and eyther note the tyme wherein ech parte was perfected by the worke of GOD, or giue ouer gessing when the groundes are fruitelous.

If all this cannot satisfie their shifting heads, yet let them shew their reason which should moue them to diuine of matters appertaining to the minde, without knowledge of the moment wherein the reasonable soules, which are in deede the singular and essentiall fourmes of men, were inspyred to the bodyes. That our reason comes from God, we learne not onelic by that text of holie writte, which prooueth that hee breathed into Adam, Animam viuentem: but by another which comes neerer to the poynt, affirming vs to haue beene created after his owne lykenesse or similitude, and againe, Inspirasse animam quæ operatur, that he inspired a soule which worketh, &c. Disciplina intellectus repleuit illos, hee replenished them with the discipline of vnderstanding, wherevnto the Preacher seemeth to allude, where he wisheth that the same body may returne to dust, Et spiritus ad Deum redeat vnde venit, and the spirite vnto GOD who gaue the same, &c. Bothe these and diuerse other passages assure vs, as I sayde before, that our reason comes from God, who made vs Lords and rulers ouer beastes in that respect, but if wee come to scanne the minute or the tyme, wherein the soule is knytte and ioyned to the body (as Astrologers must doo before they reach at our estate) then wee shall be driven to blowe the seeke, for no man is so simple as to doubt, that the chylde hath lyfe a good while before the mother feele it styrre, or the weakenesse of the partes wyll suffer it to giue a certayne signe, and yet that is the first assurance that a mortall man may take of the lyfe inspired. Nescio qualiter in vtero meo apparnistis, neque enim ego spiritum et animam donaui vobis, &c. I knowe not howe you came into my wombe, sayth that honourable mother of the Machabees (meaning of the cheefest part of man) for I neyther gaue you life nor spirite, &c. Wherevppon I may conclude, that the moment of our first beginning to be men, which ought to bee the cheefest in account, beeing thus secrete and obscure, it is not possible to gesse or ayme by other meanes, which are not lincked to the kinde or person of a man in so streight affinity. The marke that onelic resteth and remayneth then, whereby the Prophetes maye direct theyr ayme, is the tyme of byrth, which notwithstanding is so shaken and assaulted by the greatest Proctors of theyr owne decrees: as when the chylde is borne, and all thinges in that order that themselues desyre, they cannot agree together, nor resolue vppon the groundes, which should assure vs of a trueth in the substance of the matter.

Haly goes about to prooue, the tyme of conception and natiuitie to

S.i.

be

Gen. i. 27.

Sap. 15. 11.  
Eccle. 17. 5.

Eccle. 12. 7.

2. Mach.  
Hab. 7. 22.



### *A defensatiue against the poyson*

be the same, because the sunne is euer at the byrth, eyther in the seuenth, ninth, or tenth signe, from that wherein he was when the chylde was conceyued: as though we might not as well suppose a kinde of harmony betweene all tymes, because the sunne was neuer yet in any signe, from which he is not distaunt by some number of degrees at one tyme or other, and beside theyr base coniecture in this poynt, hath beene as ofte disprooued as in any. Their other fancie, that whatsoeuer is the place of the Moone when wee are conceyued, shall ascend when wee are borne: is false, and so confessed and giuen ouer, bothe by Haly, and diuerse other of the best interpreters.

Againe, how many diuerse accidentes must flocke together, before we can deuise to take the certayne minute of the byrth of any man? For first a skylfull person must be ready with his instrument, in the chamber where the chylde is borne, which eyther chaunceth not at all or verie sildome, in respect of bashfulnesse in men, to presse without regard, or vnwyllingnesse in women, to admitte them without reason to that secrete fellowshippe. Then must the parties viewe be stopped or empached, by no kinde of lette or hinderance. Againe, the byrth must not onely be by daye, which is a narrowe poynt: but with all the daye must be bright and shining, without any clowdes to disturbe the matter. Furthermore, vnlesse their instrument bee verie perfect and exacte for the present minute, as perhappes it neuer is. Auencodan is of the minde, that *Ratio partilis hocoscopi uacillabit*. These difficulties are verie streight, and yet not comparable vnto others that may be remembered, for though the diall be most iust and true, and all the howers orderlie deuided in the same: yet if the periodes and poyntes of halfe and quarter howers, and the spaces betweene bothe, bee not as deintilie directed and obserued as the rest, all comes to nothing. To this some aunswere, that they recke not so much of the certayne minute, for since there are so many pertycles of tyme, wherein it is not possible for any man in certayne countries to be borne, as appeareth by the custome of Astrologers, who neuer almost cast the byrth according to the minute which is brought, but take apart of that which eyther goes before, or commeth after, it is not harde to finde it out by rules of their profession: as though there were any arte or science vnder heauen to teach, *An res sit facta*, whether a thing be already done and perfected, or to diuine *De præteritis*. Beside, it hath beene often seene, that the minute which one Doctour putteth off, another setteth vppe, though neither of them bothe be found to resemble other. I wyll not touch theyr *Circulum verticalem*, foysted in of late to helpe a fainting cause, by *Regiomontanus*, and the freshe Astrologers, because it is inough for vs to vnderstand, that if the Starres and Planets might affoord as certayne fauours and disgraces, as they write: yet are the termes of fortune, with the whor-

*of supposed prophecies.*

whorling of the spheres, so violent and swift, as what soeuer in the last degree dyd promise good successe, vpon the next remooue is turned to mishappe and miserie.

In lyke manner, as Seleucus sayde, that common-wealthes as well as priuate personnes, had their priuate destinies: so they presume to fiste and trie them out by three sūe deuises. First, they take a kinde of marke or ayme, by the shaddowes and eclipses of the greater lyghtes, then by the state or influence of all the heauens; when the sunne entreth into the front of Aries, and thirdly, by report of the certayne minute, wherein in great Monarchies and Citties were established. I am not ignoraunt that the Romane idolators (long before the tyme of Christ, and somewhat after) selected to themselues a certayne daye, by the tetme and rytle *Diei natalitiæ*, wherein they would haue sacrifice made to the gods for the fauour of theyr first beginning, as if it were of a certayne byrth, and yet not one of all their hystories which I could euer reade, describes eyther the daye or hower wherein the first stone was layde of that renowned cittie. We finde that Romulus cut off his brother, eyther for a verie slender cause or none at all, and that the mortar of those mightie walles, was at the first besprinkled and tempered with blood: but touching other obseruations, reportes of hystories are silent.

Princes haue bene more precise about this poynt then common-wealthes, as appeareth by the bloudy tragedies of Pharao, Antiochus, Gen. 40. 10. and Herode, of which three, the first vpon his byrth daye, caused his baker to be hanged by the necke, the second commanded that all the zealous lewes, which would not put on luie garlandes at the sacrifice of Bacchus, should be put to death, and the third, at the request of a dauncing skitte, stroke of the head of saint Iohn the Baptiste. It hath bene euer counted not onely lawfull, but expedient and requisite, to celebrate the benefites of God vpon certayne dayes, for the faster printing them within our memories, of which sort were the feasts of Pasche and Tabernacles, by prescript of Moses his lawe, the keeping and obseruing of those dayes religious and holie, wherein bothe Hester and Iudith (by the mightie worke of GOD) redeemed their poore countrymen from the yoke of seruitude, after this Festum Encaniorum, which was holden by our sauour Christ himselfe, and now with vs the feast of Christmasse, Easter, Pentecost, &c. But as these haue no mixture of the Pagan rytes, no more can they be vouched in defence of dayes, wherein the Planets are considered.

Many write the Chronicles of Venice, and describe the yeere wherein the people beganne first to assemble, in that streight for succour in a stormy tyme, as many write of Switserland, and other countries that are ruled in that sort: but none that I can finde, obserue, the minute of theyr first erection, as a marke or meane whereby to deeme of the state



## *A defensatine against the poysen*

Eccle. i. 14.

of theyr prosperite. Onely Paule Flerent, noting two constellations, vnder which the state of Florence was refreshed after long and bloudy warres, findeth them so crosse and opposite one to another, as himselfe is forced to confesse, that small lyght of assuraunce may be taken from the blaze of this beacon. If our Astrologers diuine in generallitie of perilles or diseases, to fall out eyther in the North or South (as theyr craftie manner is) the world hath rather cause to smyle then feare, because the mutability of persons, fortunes and occasions in this vnstable lyfe is such, as he that aymeth onely by that leuell of the Preacher, *Vidit cuncta quæfiunt sub sole, et ecce vniuersa vanitas et afflictio spiritus*, I haue considered all things which are brought to passe vnder the sunne, and beholde all was vanitie and affliction of the spirite, &c. may glance at thinges with greater probabilitie, then others that presume with spectacles of pride, to looke into the secretes of Gods sacred ordinance. If they distinguish by particular alotting this mishap, or that to certain prouinces (because they lye more subiect to the signes wherein the Planets are at the tyme of theyr deffect, or vnder the signe of theyr triplicitie:) the ground is false, because it is not yet agreeed vpon among the learned in this arte, to what signe euerie state is subiect. It is a world to see, howe Ptolome and Albumazar skirmishe one against another in this matter, wherevpon the schooles are altogether quartred and deuided into parcialities. The lyke debate arose in olde tyme betweene Egypt and Ptolome, one referring that part of Arabia (which confineth vpon Egypt) vnto Aries, another England and Germanie: so that howe farre soeuer the countries lye in sunder, so farre are theyr iudgementes from consent and vnitie.

Some ascribe a Prouince to the shoulder of a signe, another to the thigh, and after comes a thirde, who excludes the same from any part of it. A man would thinke that these were baytes enowe to angle for vnlearned fooles: but yet the Proctors of this sophistrie suspecting, that if theyr skylle were stinted within the lymittes of natiuities alone, it would decaye theyr profite verie much, haue deuised a newe meane to make men alwayes eger and desirous of theyr furtheraunce, for so the minde of any man be styrrred and incited from aboue (say they) to demaund theyr iudgement touching any matters whatsoever, they presume that therewithall the Starres and Planettes are disposed and marshalled in a certaine course, to disclose the secrete. Would any man suppose that learned Doctors could be thus farre ouerwhelmed with selfewyll, if theyr writinges gaue not euidence against themselues? surelie, for mine owne part I would nor thinke it credible, but lyke that wicked seruaunt in the Gospell, they shall be bothe charged and conuicted by theyr owne auctoritie. For put the case the thing which I demaund, beeing eyther past or ouerblowne before I aske (though vnawares to mee)

*of supposed prophecies.*

to mee) or vnpossible to bee atchieued or obteyned by any meane, in bothe which cases it cannot bee sayde to haue *Originem vel causam in natura*, an originall or cause in nature: shall we take the Planettes to be lyke Sibillas tables, which represented to the senses in a traunce, whatsoeuer any man within his secreete thought could deuise or imagine? Hath God nothing else to doo, but to square the figure of his Planettes by the patterne of our fancie? Not so saye they, neither can we warrant any certayne aunswere to the point, sauing when the minde is mooued *Cœlitus*, from heauen, to propound it to the party. Is this the trick of it? Then let them teach vs first, to make a difference betweene the fancies which are styrrd vp from heauen, and suggested eyther by the deuill or the fleshe, which are alwayes sleeping in our bosome, and almost at no tyme (without the grace of God) seclused from the working of theyr mallice.

The straightest rule that I can finde, wherby to measure out this deintie difference, is by comparing the desires of man, with the reuealed wyll of God in the glasse of a good conscience: which if we doo, there is no doubt but the greatest part of such friuolous and fond demaunds, as are propounded to the Doctors in Astrologie, shall be weeded vp as bastard plantes, which were neuer planted by our heauenly father, nor tooke any roote in the ground of godlinesse. But put the case that sathan were in sleepe, and that the flesh rebelled not against the grace of God: how prooue they such a straite affinitie, betweene the thing desired and that which causeth the desire, as lyke the twinnes of Hypocrates they must laugh and weepe together, or that the Planettes rather must attend lyke pages to content our humours? To this they aunswer, that the same force of the Starres which concealeth what we desire to vnderstand, twitcheth vppe our wishes and desires to looke into the misterie. As if the Starres might not as well inspire our mindes, with vnderstanding of the secretes which wee seeke to knowe (if any such thing were meant) as dragge and hale vs vpward, without any warrant to be wiser by the trauaile.

Beside, if this were true, the figure should be sette according to the tyme, wherein we were esprised first with this desire, where as Astrologers are woont to iudge according to the minute of inquiry, and last of all we haue to note, that theyr excuse of twitching onely, toucheth thinges which eyther are in present, or shall be in tyme to come: whereas the writers are not ashamed to giue rules, concernnig thinges which are past long agoe, and lykewise which shall neuer be. Touching their absurdities, which are almost as infinite as Starres, if I should vnder- take to speake, a volume were not able to containe the multitude. Ptolome wyll allowe none other reason, why the Moone should be the moystest, and Saturne driest among all the Planets, then because one is



## *A defensatine against the poyson*

next another furdest fro the moysture of the soyle &c, which error, al-  
beit very shame enforce a number of his schollers, lyke the sonnes of  
Noe to conceale and shaddow with a cloake of reuerent regarde: yet  
is the poyson so farre spredde, as it breaketh out in diuers of his other  
treatises. Some hold the great conjunction to be betweene Saturne and  
Iupiter, which indeede were true, if these two mighty Planets (whose  
beames are vnited) were of one condition or property: but being so  
repugnaunt as they are, one must of force abate an other, and therefore  
aswel by this meeting as of all extreames, *Omnia mediocria nihil sum-  
mum expectamus*. They driue the flood in the dayes of Noe to such a  
time, as should rather cause a flame, if Astrology be true: because it  
chaunced (as they write) In medio triplicitatis ignea, or els we must be  
fayne to iudge of starres as we doo likewyse of dreames, that is, by their  
contraries.

Moreover it is not vnknowne, how childishly not one or two, but al  
of them defende, that Planets vnder the beames of the sun are parched  
or combuste: as if they shoulde bee greued with a migraine in theyr  
heades, lyke men, when the sunne shines ouer them, or as if the sunne it  
selfe (which parcheth or offendeth nothing vppon earth, but *Materiae  
vitio*) should be so daungerous and hurtfull to celestiall bodyes, wher  
is no defect of matter. Approching neere vnto the sun, and neyghbour-  
hood, in reason, should be one of the cheefe causes of this parchinge  
whereof they speake, and yet they thinke, the Planets, to be of greatest  
force, when they meete the sunne in eisdem minutijs in the selfe same  
minutes. For example they confesse, that the sunne offendeth no planet  
eyther in Ariete ore in Leone, whereof one is hys house an other hys  
altitude, and why so: forsooth (say they) because it were a signe of in-  
ciuitylity for any man to offend his gest, or to tryumph in his owne de-  
meanes: as if those stricte termes of humanitie were obserued amonge  
planets which are curraunt among men, or as if they spredde theyr  
beames not by necessity but by discretion.

I would gladly vnderstand of these, whither they beleue that influ-  
ence distilleth downe from all the heauens, or from the planets onely:  
if from all: then likewise from the sphere wherein the planets walke,  
which all Astrologers neglect, if onely from the Planets, then good  
night to *Norum cœlum*, whereunto neither Planet, starre, nor any shi-  
ning body can giue any vertue, in respect whereof, Guido Bonatus (a-  
gainst the greatest part of the late wryters) denyeth flatly any thyng  
about the eyght sphere to pertaine to Astrology. Because at the com-  
ming of the sun into the signe of Aries, the yeere beginnes to change:  
they conclude the signe it selfe, and all qualities belonging to the same  
to be mutable. On the other side, because the season or the temperature  
of the ayre, is not chaunged any whit at the comming of the sun into  
the

*of supposed prophecies.*

the Lyon : all actions begunne about that time by theyr prescript, are lyke to prosper and continue.

They forbidde vs when the Moone is in a fixed signe, to put on a newe garment, why so? because it is lyke that it wyll be too longe in wearing, a small fault about this towne, where garments seldome last till they be payd for. But theyr meaning is, that the garment shall continue long, not in respect of any strength or goodnes in the stuffe : but by the duraunce or disease of him, that hath neyther leysure nor liberty to weare it.

Belike one Veluet gowne, which serued first a noble man of this realme, and his sunne after him for the space of many yeeres, was put on while the Moone was in such a lasting signe : and yet I finde not that either of these Lordes were euer in disgrace, while the gowne was in wearing. I glaunce at these examples onely, to declare, howe little store of sound and perfect lyquor leaking syues can hold, which are obtruded vnto gasing fooles as vesselles of great honor. But *Quis mensus est aquas pugillo, aut celos palma ponderauit?* Who hath measured the waters in his fist, or peised the heauens in his hande? who knowes by what meane the light is parted, which scattereth the east wind vpon earth? Who is the father of the rayne, and who hath begotten the the droppes of deawe? out of whose wombe came the lfe, and who hath engendered the frost of heauen? Can we ioyne the shining starres called Pleiades together or diuide the circle of Orion, can wee bring forth Lucifer in his time, or cause the euening starres to shine vpon the sonnes of men, can we cause the lightnings to trudge at a becke or to tell vs at their comming backe againe that they are at our elbow? as if Iob should haue sayd, if we do but gesse at things that goe by soure and ordinery rule, howe can we sound the depth of misteries that are profound and infinite? no calculator nor Astrologer by theyr Ephemerides, but blessed angels by the gift and spirite of almighty God, sette vpe the figure of the birth of Isaac and Sampson, of this kind was Gabriell, when he deliuered the ioyfull tydings to the blessed vyrgin of her sonne, and what should be perfourmed by his hande : so was that other angell which assured Zacharye, that not onely in hys latter dayes he shoulde haue a sonne, *Sed et multos natiuitate eius gauisuros*, that withall (in respect he should prepare the passage of our Lorde) a number should reioyse in his natiuitie.

These were indeede the sound and lawfull Prophets; others are but counterfaites & not woorth the reckning. For how were it a parcell of Gods high prerogatiue; *Annunciare futura antequam eueniant*, to foretell thinges future before they come to passe, or to send down plagues & crosse, *Quorum ortum non videbimus*, whose fountaine or originall we shall not see : if euery sphere were like a globe of Oracles, what

Esay. 40, 13.

Iob. 38,

Luk. 1, 3.

Luk. 1, 14.

Esay. 42, 9,

Esay. 47, 11,

certaine



## A defensatiue against the poyson

certaine aime or leuell can they take by rousing Planets, when the mark whereby they take, the same is mouable. Occumbet (a) sol super prophetas, et obtenebrabitur super eos dies. The sunne shall sette vpon the prophets, and the day shall waxe darke ouer them, againe, the sun shall be eclipsed, Et retrahent (b) stellæ splendorem suum, and the stars shall drawe backe theyr beames. God shall gyue charge to the sun and hee shall not ryse, and (c) shutte vppe the starres vnder his signet. The glory of the heauens shal (d) melt & waft away like a smoke, and as a garnēt shall they be consumed: in stedde whereof, we shall beholde the (e) signe of the sonne of man (whereof Ptolome gaue neither light nor warning in his tables) what shall it then anaille Egypt to clamber vppe to the (f) toppes of hylles? or why shall (g) Assyria be preferred any longer before other countryes, for the plainnesse of her Champion? What a simplicity will it bee reputed in the people Hermanduri and Catti, in those dayes to dreame? Eos (h) maxime locos propinquare coelo, præcesque mortalium nusquam proprius audiri, that those mountaines approche neereft to the skie, and that the sutes and prayers of vs mortall men, are not any where heard neerer by the goods &c. Lactantius and others of the learned fathers, haue so passingly confuted these conceites, as I may be bolde (vpon so cleere a conquest) to conclude with the Preacher: (i) Animam viri sancti magis enuntiare vera, quam septem circumspectores sedentes in excelsis ad speculandum, that the soule or spirit of one godly man dooth rather vtter trueth, then seuen gazers sitting in high places to beholde &c. we repayre not to the prophets for light of any thinge more ordinarilye, then of our ende: and yet the scriptures witnes, that it stealeth (k) vpon vs priuily like a theefe in the night, without any warning till death be within the doores, to this ende, that we may be alwayes ready with Oliue braunches in our hande, hauing our loynes gyrt, and the (l) lampe of charity burninge in our hearts, to meete with the bridegrome. Nescit (m) homo finem suum &c. No man knowes his ende: but as a fish is caught with a nette and byrdes with a snare, so are men attached also by this bayly arraunt who neuer retunes the writte with a Non est inuentus. The (n) Angel (vnto whom it pleased God to reueale many thinges) coulde giue no gessie at life. Elizeus (o) knewe no more (concerning the widdowes sonne) then was reuealed. Dauid (p) though he were a Prophet, as appeareth by his demaunde (who knew whither God would graunt lyfe to his little sonne or not) was not priuie to the secrete, that is, whether he should perish or recouer. Ezechias had none other light of his reuerie, then was imparted by (q) Gods holy messenger: and there is no doubt, but if Ieroboams calues coulde haue assured him, whither hys sonne should lyue or dye, he woulde neuer haue sent to the Prophet (r) Ahias in Siloh. S. Peter was not suffered to (s) knowe the date of sayne

Johns

## of supposed prophecies.

Johns lyfe, *ἵνα ἔσται ἡ κίνησις τῶν πάντων καὶ ὁ νόμος*, for no man knowes the certayne boundes of his prefixed ende, sayth (t) Pyndarus, or whether he shall close his eyes with happinesse, which differres lyttle from that sentence of saint Iames. Ignoratis (v) quid erit in crastino, &c. You knowe not what shall chaunce to morrowe, for our lyfe is a vapour, and therefore albeit king Lewes (x) the eleuenth, besought a certayne godly man called father Robert (who lyued more then 35. yeeres, in continuall prayer & sequestration from the world) to prolong his life, supposing that his vertue might obtayne some further grace at the hand of GOD: yet the good man answered the King with great temperance and modesty, that it was a better course to dispose himselfe, entierely to the (y) way of all fleshe, then to looke backe with Lots wife, or to contend against the wyll of GOD, who disposeth bothe of lyfe and death, as seemeth best to his heauenlie wisdom.

Moreover, the diuines of that age, lamenting the Kinges ouer great desire of lyfe, which though it could haue obtayned respyte for a tyme, must end at last: perswaded him in the presence of his principall Physician Coctier, not to plant his confidence in helpes of Physicke with (z) king Asa, nor to flutter on the ground with Pyes and layes, but as Chrysostome wylleth vs, lyke Eagles to aspyre and mount vpp to the Skies, and stretch our handes to him, who is able onely to abate and mitigate extremities. If then neyther Angelles, Princes, Prophetes, nor Apostles, can tell more concerning matters of this kinde, then it pleaseth GOD to publishe and reueale by meane of extraordinarie grace: what simple fooles are wee to thinke, that more maye be discerned in an Ephemerides, which was deuised by the witte of man then attayned by perfection and integritie of lyfe, which onely commeth by the grace of the diuine goodnesse.

Our reason leadeth vs to iudge of such effectes to come, as participate De natura communi, as that one man shall beget another, and so forth in other thinges: but when this generallity is restrained and contracted to particular conceites, as whether this man shall beget a childe, of this or that complexion and qualitie, &c. We cannot finde out any certayne holde in nature, wherevppon to ground or settle our diuinings of such matters, for it is one thing to conceiue a man (as the Logicians speake) in Specie, that is, in kinde, which neuer fayles, Nisi natura impediatur, vnlesse nature be empeached in his course, and another thing to treat of him, as he is Circumscriptus his vel illis accidentibus, circumscribed with these or those accidents, as learning, courage, personage, &c. Which are neither inseparably, tyed to nature, nor to any other cause that is beneath or aboue the Moone, excepting the prouidence of God alone, of what kinde or degree soeuer. Before we presume thus farre, we must make account to persist vnchaungeable for euer, in one state of

T. j.

health,

(t) Ode. 23.

(v) Iam. 4. 14.

(x) Phil. de. 11. com. in Iud.

(y) Iosu. 23. 14.

(z) 2. Par. 16. 13.



## *A defensatine against the poyson*

health, strength, courage, wisdom, personage, &c. Beside, we must be sure that none of all the meanes and middle causes, whereby those qualities were bredde and wrought in the parentes themselves, be altered and put out of the former straine, or else to diuine in this sort is a thing vupossible.

**Experience.**

**T**He proctors and abettors of this arte alledge Experience, is a trustie and most certayne guide, to be regarded and beleeued in these matters. For if the straungest accidentes that euer were (saye they) as that of Noes floud, of the death of Cæsar, of the byrth of Christ, &c. haue chaunced at such tyme, as Iupiter and Saturne were conioynged in Cancer, Scorpio & Pisces: it is a ground whereby we may presume, that when we see the like reuiued in this age, some straunge euent is not vnlyke to follow. To this argument I could make aunswer easilie, by standing vpon defence of theyr account, which prooue the greatest parte of writers to haue erred in the reuolution of those accidentes. But because it may be, that sometymes a certayne meeting of the Planettes may fall out, and chaunce before a straunge euent, whereof it is no parte nor parcell of a cause: I rather chose by generallitie of reason to refell their groundes, then by opposing or excepting to this poynt, or that alone to leaue the rest vn-satisfied: Experience is onely, *Iterata eiusdem euentus obseruatio*, but this can neuer be, because one and the selfe-same constellation or face of heauen, in all respectes which hath beene once, is neuer seene againe, therefore there can be no certayne rule for their experience.

The Doctors panting (as men almost out of breath) with this strait gripe, applye theyr vttermoost endeouour to conceale and shaddowe the disgrace thereof, by supposing that it is inough for the greatest Planets to concurre, though the rest be neyther vnderstoode nor numbred. But this reioynder wyll not serue. For fyrst these greater Planettes, which bestowe theyr influence according to the matter which they finde, cannot be sayde at bothe tymes to worke one effect: because the matter wherevpon they worke, is not prepared and disposed in one and the selfe-same manner.

Againe, as well may we defend the musicke of two stringes, to make the same consort in playing of a pauine: or two simples onely to worke the same effecte, in compounding a receyte, which many drugges and simples doo as that two Planettes, whereof neyther can be woorthilie compared to the sunne, are able to perfourme as much as all the rest in generall. For that which commeth from the vertue of one Planette, may be called one effect, but that which ryseth and proceedeth from an vniuersall mixture is another, and as it is one ouerfight that totum is not any way considered in this, so is yet a greater  
that

*of supposed prophecies.*

that the partes are not so matched, entermixed and compounded in Eodem toto, as they were in that other figure. Astrologers themselves confesse, the vertue of our Planet to be much increased or abated by the beames of another, which beeing true, according to the groundes of theyr owne deuise: howe can wee thinke that theyr effectes are one, whose signes, aspectes, and qualities are found to differre? Wee maye compare the generall and vniuersall influence of Starres, to Hiemplales fagotte, which could not be broken whyle it helde together, but fell quite in sunder when the bande was loose: or to the perfect trempe of armour, which wyll neuer waxe harde, whyle the least thing that is needfull to the working and compounding of the same dooth want, or to a medicine that worketh in a diuerse manner, where the certayne order and prescript of Phisicke is not kept: or to the Lanterne of the Church of Elie, which being built according to the true proportion of Geometrie, is more shaken by the tolling of one bell alone, then by ringing of them also together.

If any vrge against me, that by phisicke we maye deeme of two diseases, that are not alyke in all degrees, they must be tolde againe that the cases are not lyke, for where the paines are sensible and certayne, they may soone be raunged to the generall prescript and course of arte: but in the matter of the Planettes, almost all thinges are concluded by imagination, againe, the simples which are seene and vnderstoode, may be vsed and applied with skyll, but beames of Planets are so mashed and confounded in one blaze of lyght, as we can neyther finde the vertue by the beame, nor distinguishe one from another by the manner of theyr influence. I am not ignoraunt beside all this, how prone and wylling diuerse are by nature, to make images agree for pleasing of a certaine moode, which differre much: for prooffe whereof we are to note, that almost nothing can fall out so wide from any former ayme, but wee wil make it sutable with dreames or fantasies of the night, in some one poynt if not in more, and by one peeuishe sleight or other. But that rule of Cicero is most fitte to be regarded in this case, *Rationibus & argumentis oportere non euentis, &c.* That we must prooue by reasons and approoued arguments, not by euentes, how thinges accord or disagree, and that of saint Augustine lykewise, reiecting all degrees and kindes of methodes whatsoeuer as rediculous and vaine, whereby thinges were not obserued vpon the tryall of theyr proper force: but men by noting and obseruing properties, which were neuer in the thinges themselves, but in theyr owne conceyte, would needes inferre a consequent without experience. Thus fyrst I prooue, that because there neyther is nor can bee, *Iterata obseruatio*, therefore all pretences of experience are but vayles and shaddowes of abuse, and that where vertue must bee drawne from many causes, it auayleth lytle to be learned in the state of

De doctri.  
Christ. lib. 2  
cap. 24.



## *A defensaine against the poysen*

one, according to that maxime of the Ciuill lawe, *Quod omnes tangit ab omnibus debet approbari.*

Nowe will I giue another note of no lesse importance then the first, that although the Planets hold theyr places, cast regards, euē as before & vniuersally the face of heauē were at the casting of the second figure, as it was in all respects, which is as much as they require to be confessed, for the prooffe and warraunt of theyr owne direction: yet can this further & auaille the very little, tyll they prooue withall, that in the first example when thinges were disposed in this fourme, it was not possible to finde out a more likely cause, wherevnto the fortune which succeeded afterward, might haue beene ascribed with more probability. The Sunne is in the middle of the heauen when the clocke strikes twelue, & yet no wise man wil cōceiue that the striking of the clocke, is any meane to rayse or to aduance the Sun to that height of maiesty.

It chaunceth sometimes to thunder about that time and season of the yeare, when Swannes hatch theyr young: and yet no doubt it is a paradoxe of simple men to thinke, that a Swanne can not hatch without a cracke of thunder. I knew my selfe a Lady, which desiring much to see the manner of an eclipse, was presently tormented with a greuous fitte and passion of the moother: but a good phisition considering, howe many women looke vppon the like without eyther perill or offence vnto theyr health, would attribute the cause of her infirmity, rather to the colde she tooke then to the thing she feared. It can not be denyed, that vppon the gesses which were made by the sight of byrdes and bowels of bruit beastes, some thinges fell out at sundry times according to the Prophets ayme, though not by meane or influence of those thynges which were fondly supposed to be causes. The Romaines tooke the crowing of a Cocke for an abode of victory, though no Philosopher be ignoraunt, that this proceedeth of a gallant lustinesse vppon the first digestion.

Againe, the sight of many Crowes vppon the left side of the campe, made them very much afrayde of some badde lucke: as if the greate God Iupiter had nothing els to doo (sayde Carneades) but to drye iacke dawes in a flocke together. For my part I make no doubt, but the deuill (who longed so much for leaue to rush into a filthy hearde of swine) was as conuersaunt among the fowles, and alwayes drew them to that side, which serued best to blinde the peoples eyes, and sincke them deepest in the poole of incredulity. But most straunge it is, that dyuers of the wiser sort were content to thinke, that entrailes of bruite beastes were tables, wherein theyr diuiners might descry the fortune of the common wealth. Secondly, that not the bowels of all beastes, were thought to be of equall vertue to giue out this light: but of those

only which were allotted and appoynted to the sacrifice. Thirdly, that those entrailes drew theiſe vertues. A diuinitie per totum orbem diffusa, from diuinity ſpredded ouer all the world. And laſt of all, that albeit the bowels of the beaſtes neuer ſo entire and ſounde, before the flight of fowles or the ſacrifice ſolemnized: yet the latter ſodainly became corrupt, the foules diuerted from theiſe courſe in the turning of an eye, to reueale the deſtinies. As if nature muſt receiue a wounde, before ſhe giue vs warning of miſhappes to come, or all the droue of Oxen ſhould as well want lyuers, as that one which is appoynted for the ſacrifice: if theiſe entrailes might be ſearched thoroughly, or as if ſomewhat might conſume to nothing, riſe of nothing, or be chaunged in an inſtant, which were repugnaunt to theiſe owne philoſophy. But let Egypt and Pamphilia beleue of byrds and cages what they liſt, let Egypt the firſt parent of Aſtrology ſuppoſe, Volatibus auium cantibusque, tanquam ſignis certiffimis res futuras declarari, that by the flight and ſonges of byrdes, as by moſt certaine ſignes or tokens future chances are declared, it is inough for me that the wiſeſt kyng that euer was, allowes no difference at all betweene thoſe that apply theſe lyes, that are fedde with winde, and follow whiſking byrdes, in an other place, ſuch perſonnes are affirmed *Æſtimare quod ignorant*, to valewe or conſider what they doo not vnderſtand, and the Prophet Baruch accuſeth them in the name of God, which ſeek to dally or deceiue the people with the byrds of heauen &c. If then the ſame conſent of Planets will not ſerue, ſo long as we can finde a better and a neerer cauſe then that, from whence to draw the reaſon of euents: I muſt adioyne a thyrde prouiſo, for the clearing of all ſcruples in this poynt, which is, that for aſmuch as often times the proper and true cauſes lurke, when the falſe and counterfeit appeare more bright and euident in outward ſhowe, we may not reſt contented with this obſeruation alone, that after ſuch an Eclipse the Germanes were infeſted, and euombred with ciuill warre, nor that the witte of man could not diſcouer, any playner or more like ly cauſe of ciuill warre at that time, then the daunger of Eclipse, vnleſſe they giue a reaſon therewithall, why ſuch a cauſe ſhould breede the like effect, or at the leaſt make prooſe, that nothing hindereth in nature why one of theſe may not begette and breede an other, otherwiſe there can be neither a ſure nor probability by the coniecture. For example at that very tyme wherein the ſteeple of a Village called Tenterden in Kent was built, the hand of Sandwich began firſt to barre and fall into decay. If wee looke into the ſtate of tymes, they differ not a minute (as old men report, if into the cauſes that might begin this alteration, albeit the building of the ſteeple were not very lyke to hurt the hauſe: yet was there nothing elſe that might abuſe their ſence, and all this notwithstanding we count him little better then a ſoole, that vndertoke to draw the

De diuine  
lib. 2.

Pro. 10. 5.  
Pou. 23. 7.  
Bar. 3. 17.



## *A defensative against the payson*

of decay from the building of the steeple. Three elmes were set vpon the hyl by Sandy chappell, at the byrth of king Edward, a Gentlewoman (of mine acquaintaunce) bare fowre chyldren vppon fowre Easter daies together, an Eagle tooke of Tarquines cappe and set it on againe, before he were admitted to the regiment of Roome. All these were signes coincident; bothe to the tymes and to the thinges which came to passe: and yet because there is no reason to deriue them from such emptie shewes, as haue not (as I sayd before) *Rationem causæ & effecti*, no man wyll allowe the gesses that are collected in that manner. But some wyll aske, howe if there be no certayntie in this diuining by the Starres, howe it comes to passe, that Astrologers should hytte so right vpon a mischeefe diuerse times? Whervpon I may reioigne by a counter demaunde, howe it were possible for them to swerue so groslye, and to lye so many tymes, if theyr arte were plaine and euident, sauing that as Chrysostome noteth verie well, our manner is to prayse theyr chaunce, and ouer-see their errors? It is reported by Cor Tacitus, that Astrologers in his tyme found a verie fine excuse for theyr manifold escapes, which was, that albeit the chaunces of our life were prefixed & determined in the first minute of our liues: yet men for wāt of cūning ouershot the point, and mistooke the certaine grounds of their owne profession. As though they should acknowledge that it were an arte, but vnder- stood by none, which kinde of Alchimie hath cost more crownes, then the golden quintessence it selfe were woorth, though the matter (in respect whereof, the melters blowe so many smoking coales in vaine) were effected to theyr lyking. But true it is, that they which for the most part shoote most wide and farre from ayme, maye dribbe once in a day by chaunce into the spell, and Starre diuiners are not so voide of all good happe, but they may speede sometyme by fortune, when their cunning fayleth them.

Next to the shaddowes and pretences of experience, which haue been mette withall at large, they seeme to bragge most of the straunge euents, which followe for the most part after blazing Starres, as if they were the summoners of God, to call Princes to the seate of iudgement. Fyrst therefore let vs looke into the nature of a Comete, and afterward into the reasons by the force, of which it is supposed, that the same should portend plague, famine, warre, or the death of Potentates. Some tooke the Comete, to haue been a starre ordained and created from the first beginning of the world, *Ad prænunciandum malum*, to prognosticate mishaps, and of this minde was Seneca, whome because he neyther bringeth reason nor example, but his owne bare word: I referre to those vnlearned schooles, in which *astrologia* wyll bee taken and accepted as a found aūthoritie. *Nos talem consuetudinem non habemus, neque ecclesia Dei*, For we haue no such custome, nor the Church of God. *Scito* thought

Anab. li. 16

1 Cor. 11. 16

### *of supposed prophecies.*

thought it was a Starre, inuironed with a thicke and foggie clowde. Cardan, a sphere inflamed by the Sunne, the sundrie fourmes and disposition of whose beames, made *Cauda vel crinem*, &c. as the subiect was prepared for the purpose, *A deo naturale est magis noua quam magna mirari*, so naturall a thing it is to gaze on thinges, that are rather straunge then woonderfull. Aristotle, whose reason and aucthoritie I reuerence and preferre before the rest, conceyueth the matter of the Comete, to be a passing whote and drie exhalation, which being lysted vp by the force and vertue of the sunne, is afterward enflamed, partlie by the element of fyre vpon which it bordereth, and partlie by the motion of the heauens which woorleth it about, &c. Thus farre the Planettes haue no dealing with a Comete, otherwise then by lysting vp the matter of the same: and yet none otherwise, then of hayle and snowe, &c. which notwithstanding, none of them admitte as signes or tokens of calamitie.

The prophetes Astrologically, finding theyr ayme quite excluded by this meane suppose, that Saturne hauing bound *Meatus terræ*, the passages, and (as it were) the arteries and veines of the earth, is the fyrst cause of conceiuing fumes, which after they haue once ascended, he begins to thicken with the lyke effect, that Mars may giue fyre to the peece, and enflame them with the match of his indignation. The difference betweene Astrologers and Aristotle consisteth in this poynt, that wheras the Philosopher could not espie or finde out any other effect to be wrought by them, then winds and drought: they speake of plagues, mortalitie, and dearth, with a heape of myseries. Thus from the earth ryse fumes, of fumes growe windes, which windes infest the fruites, the bodyes, and whatsoeuer else is subiect to theyr venome. Fyrst therefore, if it maye bee lawfull to dispute with Aristotle (whome I would rather followe as a guide in matters of Philosophie, then controwle as a personne wandering beside the waye) it seemeth vnto mee, that albeit the fumes hauing receyued by the sunne a deepe impression of heate, are enclyned and disposed to ascende: yet can I see no reason to beleeue, that this conceyued heate should continew any longer, then tyll it meete with a greater colde, which is neuer wanting in *Media Æris regione*. Beside, it is the propertie of any fume, by so much as it mounteth higher, to become more weake, and so to waste away by degrees, tyll it be dissolued into ayre, and consumed altogether. Againe, imagine it ascend vp to the highest parr, we must presume, that eyther it is thickened by heate or colde: now by heate it is not, in respect the matter is so thinne, and by colde it can not, for the perpetuities of motion. I knowe that heate alone is able to enflame *Corpora solida*: but those that are more thinne, as smoke and ayre, wexe colde by styrring too and fro, which nothing prooueth more directlie then the common



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

use of fannes, wherewith the Ladies vse to coole themselves in the greatest heate of summer. Againe, if a blazing Starre be lyke a mount or masse of fumes congealed in a lump, and the matter is no sooner hoysted vpp, but lyke a lump of flaxe it taketh flame: how chāunceth it that no part of this burning Aetna casteth any blaze, tyll all be set on fire at once? For neyther any cause materiall or efficient, neyther tyme nor place, may be sayd to want for the purpose. If they burne and are not seene, why waste they not? If they waste away, how rise they to the masse of a mountaine? Beside, the proper forme of fire is in manner of a Pyramides, where as the Cometes fall and resemble nothing lesse then that kinde of figure. It were straunge also, that this mountaine should neyther come of outward heate, nor leaue any greater heate behinde, Eliciente sole mittente terra excipiente are, when the soyle delyuers fumes, the sunne drawes them vp, and the ayre receyueth them. Moreouer, why should not other fyrie meteors, as *Candela ardens, draco, volans stellarum traiectiones*, glancing or shooting of the Starres, which happen almost euerie night in one place or other, portend lyke mishappes that Cometes doo, because although they seeme to differre in theyr fourme: yet are they framed and compounded of one kinde of matter, which theyr great god Ptolome perceiving, gaue allowaunce vnto them likewise of some straunge effects, when the manner of their glaunsing is obserued.

Mizaldus a great Doctour of that schoole, proceedeth further in this poynt, supposing that diuersitie of colours in the clowdes, is caused by the sundrie vertues of the Planettes in their singuler effectes, and addeth further, that himselfe by dilligent regard and looking to those things, hath attayned to the knowledge of some matters of great moment: as if the meanest Sophister in Cambridge, could not prooue vnto the greatest Rabies of Astrologie, that the clowdes are onely certayne waterish exhalations, expresseing diuerse colours as they lye to the beames of the sunne, but voide of any deeper or profounder misterie. If they that wyll diuine of the fortune of theyr freend, by the perfect minute of the byrth, or of the Comete by the first apparance, must be certaine and assured of the tyme: I would be glad to know by what infallible and vndoubted rule, the Prophets can direct according to the certaine time, when the Comete is not seene by day, and againe, since Cometes bothe increase and decline by degrees, which appeareth notably by that which Seneca reporteth, of one after the decease of Demetrius the king of Siria, and by those likewise which in our owne tyme we haue seene, Let any one of them delyuer a good reason, why they rather deeme of Cometes after they are bushed, and haue blazed in theyr greatest ruffe, then as we gesse at infants by theyr first originall. I could adioyne to this, that diuerse Cometes haue not shewed themselves in twelue or fowre-

### *of supposed prophecies.*

fourteene dayes together, after the time of theyr first apparence, by reason of foule wether: during which space of discontinuance, because it is not certaine(as they write themselves) what chaunges haue succeeded in the thing, therefore it is not possible for any man to diuine or gesse by arte, what euent shall follow.

As for their experience of many Comets that haue brought foorth one effect, I answer first, as I dyd before, that a Comet of the selfe same kinde in all degrees can hardly come agayne, or if it coulde: yet neyther store of matter which should nourish or abate it, nor the middle causes which may further his effecte, are alwayes the same, and therefore to conclude or make account, that thus and thus thinges shall fall out before they come in prooffe, is as if a generall shoulde determine with himselfe before he come before a towne of warre, to find the fittest place for battery the first day of his safe arriual there, the next day hauing planted his great ordinaunce in the strongest place, to batter till he make a breache, and the third day to giue a sharpe assault, to apply the scaling Ladders, to enter and to spoyle the Cittizens, wythout regarde of any valour on that other side, or counter stratageme that may be vsed, eyther to cutte off, or at the least to hinder and delay thev enterprise. For if the payne and hazarde were not greater in executing with the sword, then plotting with the penne, neither the conquerers of olde time, nor the Colonelles of this, should haue deserued halfe the prayse which the world affoordeth them.

Againe, the Comets differ so much in the qualities of theyr effect, as we know no more aganist which to prouide or arme our selues, the the state of Athens did, which being warned by Apollo to preuent *περιλειψή* which word imports both plague and famine, as it is pronounced in the Greeke: mistrusted what was furthest from theyr harme, and ouersaw the perryll which in very deede was imminent. Furthermore, all Comets chaunce not at one time nor in one place, neyther haue they one periode of ending or continuance. They differ also in theyr figure motion and quantity, the least of all which circumstances, may deceiue the Prophets aime, and bring foorth some straung effect that is leaste looked for. But the surest way to shake theyr paynted bulwarke of experience, is by making plaine, that neyther Princes alwayes dye when Comets blaze, nor Comets euer blaze when Princes dye: whereas it standeth them in hande (which will deduct a certaine ground from the sequell of euent) to prooue, that neyther those euent fall out by any other meane, neyther sayle or misse at any time, whensoever the same cause dooth goe before, which should direct and leade them to theyr yssue.

Touching the first poynt, when soeuer any man can shewe, that a Prince or potentate hath dyed vpon the blazing of a Comet, I wil first



### *A defensatiue against the poyson*

encounter him, by proouing that the lyke euent hath chaunced often-  
times, vppon the glaring of a rainebowe. Secondly, by giuing a more  
likely reason of the Princes death, then the blush of a comet, in which  
case *Cedendum rationi potius quam phantasia*, since the wisest and  
best learned mē aliue may swarue *τά μὲν ὅλας ἀγνοῦσάιντες τὰ δὲ κακὰς κρινόν-  
τες τὰ δὲ ἀμειλίκερον γραφάιντες* by carelesse writing in some poynts, misdee-  
ming in some, and being altogether ignoraunt in others. Thirdly wee  
can not finde, that any comet blased before the death of Firdinand or  
Maximilian, both famous Emperours of this time wherein we lyue,  
nor before the death of two Frenche kinges, of the king of Pollande,  
the great Turke, of two Princes, and two queenes of Spayne, of a Pope  
Don Iuan di Austria, a Counte Palatin, a duke of Brunswicke, & diuers  
other of like quality, none before the masse of S. Bartholmew, none  
before the great plague, wherewith Thucidedes reportes, almost the  
third part of the world to haue beene swept away none before, the like  
in Plinies time, and of late dayes in Venice, Polland and some partes of  
Germany, none before that horrible inuasion, whereby so many men  
and women were ledde captiue out of Pollande by the Scithians, none  
before the losse of Ciprus and Goletta, the ciuill warres of Fraunce,  
the drowning of some parts of Holland, the desolatiō almost of Flaun-  
ders and Brabant, the quaking of Ferrare, with a number more, which  
it greeneeth and yrketh a good minde to touch, although they serue  
most fitly to disprooue theyr rules, which alwayes make the comets ei-  
ther causes or forerunners of so manifolde and desperate extremities.  
Last of all, it were against the groundes aswell of reason as of arte, to  
make a rule vppon a doubtfull prooffe, or to suppose that euery comete  
is a messenger of some mishappe, when not onely Pliny reporteth that  
which shined at the playes of Augustus, to haue beene most fortunate:  
but beside a number, that professe the fayth and knowledge of the  
starres likewise, (to winne more credite to theyr arte) haue giuen a-  
broade, that the byrth of Christ was signified, and in a sort prefigured  
by that happy Comet, for in any wise the chaunge and alteration of old  
rites, must be one perticuler effect of the blasing comets. Those of the  
yeeres of our Lorde 1097. and againe 1506. brought such aboun-  
dauce of all thinges, and prises to so lowe an ebbe, as the stories haue  
recorded them for monuments and mirrors to posterity: I coulde saye  
the like of others which haue beene seene A. D. 1555. 1556. 1557.  
1558. after all which yeeres nothing chaunced that shoulde dryue a  
man to seeke out any cause aboue the common reache, and therefore I  
allow the dilligence of Gemma frisius taking notice of as many good  
as bad effects, which haue succeded after comets. Aboue all the rest, I  
must remember that (which appearing of late yeeres in Cassiopea)  
gaue encouragement to diuers wryters to presume vpon some thinges,  
where

### *of supposed prophecies.*

wherein it seemed to resemble that which appeared after the byrth of Christ. Infideles in Christi castra transitorios, that the Pagans would returne into the bosome of the Church, so farre it was from portending any fearefull accident, that might affright the multitude. We reade of no more then two kindes of signes, Naturall, and Artificiall, of the first kinde Cometes are not: because they neither cause the plague, as the South winde causeth rayne, nor are effectes thereof, as smoke is of fire, nor haue one common cause with the matter which they signifie, as the rednesse of the skie dooth signifie fayre weather, because one and the selfe same cause, dooth bring both rednesse and fayre weather. On the other side, Artificiall they cannot be, because God hath not allotted any such particuler effect to them as to the rayne-bowe, that is, to warrant and assure vs from a second floudde, therefore are they no signes at all, of accidents that are to fall out and happen. But in the name of God, howe can they vouch a probable or lykelie cause by blazing of a Comete, to procure the death of any Prince? &c. Marry, saye they, Cometes are the cause of windes, windes bring exceeding drougt and heate in Ambiente ære, this heate offendeth bodies that are most delicate and tender, by the manner of theyr bringing vp, this offendec eyther breedeth sicknesse, by reason choller is enflamed or desire to warre: therefore Cometes are the causes what great Princes are most lyke, eyther to fall into some daungerous diseale, or to perishe in the brunt of battell.

The best meane to dissolue this false Sorites, is by disproofof euerie braunch and member of the same, that nothing may be left to deceyue the studious. Fyrst therefore to beginne with fumes and exhalations, it may be reasonable doubted, whether any part or strength of them remayne, to breede and bring foorth windes vpon the fading of the Comete. For since the fumes are not effects, but the verie cause materiall whereby the flame is fedde, as our Lampes are in lyke manner among vs with oyle: it seemeth vnto me by reason, that bothe the flame and fume should quayle and make an ende together. But imagine that we should admitte a residence of fumes, wherby the element of ayre wherin we liue should be corrupted, tainted and infected to the perill of our health, so often as the Comete neyther lasteth long inough, nor is strong inough to consume them all: yet first we gather heerevpon, that since this taynt proceedeth not from fumes which burne, but which were neuer burned, the Comete is no cause of maladies, Per se, but by meere accident. Secondly, that those Astrologers were fooles, which helde the Comete to be by so much more daungerous, as it was more large and had a longer tyme to burne: and thirdly, because it is not euident to the sence or witte of any man before a proofof, how these proportions aunswer one another, we must confesse it to be no lesse harde



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

to diuine, whether any Comete infect or purge, whether it spend all the matter, or leaue some part of it vnconsumed.

But what neede we wander in by-ways, when our owne experience may mooue vs to suppose, that as all kindes of fumes are found to gather (by a kinde of naturall instinct) to the mouth of a furnace or an ouen, which drawes them in: so lykewise whatsoeuer fume proceedeth from the ground, is no lesse inclined to ascend and mount vppe to the furnace of a blazing Comete. It remayueth then, that some of our expert Astrologers declare what chaunge or alteration hath chaunced, cyther in the moouing of the spheres or element of fyre, which might cause the matter to beginne to blaze, betweene the comming vppe of those fumes which ascended first, and that succeeded afterward, or else acknowledge, that the latter fumes are no lesse able to maintaine and feede the flame, tyll all the masse be spent, then the former were to kindle it. But let vs graunt (for manners sake, and for the cleaner boulding out of trueth) that certayne fumes or exhalations remayne when the Comete is extinct, (which reason, notwithstanding dooth impugne) let vs confesse so much as any probabilitie may countenance: yet eyther must wee finde some kinde of instrumentall, or impulsive cause, which may driue downe the fumes into the lower parts that haue been once alofte, or else it forceth nothing to the furtheraunce of that which they striue so much to iustifie.

The nature of the Starres and Planettes is to lyft vp matter, but not to beate it downe, the fyre dooth it not, as we may gather by the reason of the furnace which I brought before; and least of all wee are to thinke, that they descend of theyr owne instinct, because if they were lyght before, it is no doubt but they are made more delicate and thin, and as it were refyned in the labour, therefore let them take heede of plagues and harde euentes, that dwell aboue the supream region of the ayre, wherein the fumes are kept for store, but none of vs hath any cause to be afrayde, at whome they neuer come, so farre as reason is able to discover: *Cessante enim causa cessat effectus*, for where the causes fayle, it is not possible for effects to follow. Againe, without heate no fumes can bee, but by Philosophy we learne, *Ex tincto Cometa calorem non superesse*: therefore when the Comete burneth, they are not fumes, but fancies.

Thus maye we so dispose all exhalations as no windes neede to ryse, and though they should, it were a matter of no verie great importance. For as we see by prooffe, that the flame which comes from Sacke whyle it is in burning, giues an outward blaze, but hath not so much force as to singe a clowte: we maye presume the lyke of spirites, which ascend and issue from the Comete. The rage of heate is violent, where the flame takes holde of a subiect that is grosse and thicke, but if the same  
be

*of supposed prophecies.*

be weake and thinne, the showe maye make the world afrayde, but the peryll is not any whitte to be regarded. If any difference be to be found in this comparifon, it maketh most againſt themſelues, for that theyr fumes when they are at the thickeſt, cannot be compared to the weight or, poyze of licquor, may be prooued thus: that licquor if it were aboue, would ſpeedilie deſcend, whereas the fumes and ſpirites couer to aſcend, and ſuggeſt more ſtore of matter wherewithall to maintayne the Comete.

Now would I knowe, what cauſe we haue to feare ſo many diuerſe ſortes of wrackes, when the Comete (whence the windeſ are ſayde to come) are in place farre off, and the heate which proceedeth from the ſunne hath no ſtrength or force at all to moleſt our bodies? I could enforce them further, to ſette downe the lymittes or degrees, wherein they take vppon them to marſhall and beſtowe the poyſon and contagion of theſe exhalations, which neyther diſtaunce of the paſſage, nor a waſting flame can abate or ſpende ſo farre, but that great ſtore of matter wyll remayne, to fylle the world with more diſeaſes of all ſortes, then Pandoras boxe affoorded. Againe, although we ſhould admitte drie windeſ to ryſe of fumes, &c. Yet can the ſkilfull huſbandman aſſure vs, that neyther all windeſ hurt, nor all droughts are daungerous: naye, rather from ouer-much Humiditie ſpringeth our diſtemper, and for the prooſe heereof wee are to note, that poore men of the cuntry which lyue in a ſmoaky Cottage, keepe theyr health in better ſtate, then great Princes in theyr Courtes of pleaſure. If then there be no more offence in true ſmoake in deede, what ayleth vs to attribute and aſcribe ſo much to that which is imagined? If there be none in ſmoakes beneath which are moſt groſſe, why ſhould we feare fumes aboue, which are bothe refyned in the flame, and abated in the paſſage? But let the fumes be feruent, as they teach, they can drawe nothing out of vs, (which are much more tranſpirable then the clots of earth) ſauing Acres humores, ſharpe humours, are ſutable vnto themſelues in qualitie: and rather cauſe them hynder health, ſo long as thicker ſtay behinde, to keepe our bodies in a better temper.

But aboue all I condemne theyr fancies moſt, which are not aſhamed to aſcribe the cauſes of an earth-quake to a blazing ſtarre, whoſe heate drawes vppe the fumes out of the ground: which being otherwiſe ſuppreſſed and reſtrained in the bowelles of the ſame, would rather haue bene the cauſe of a quiuering. Peucer prognostiicated vppon the laſte Comete, that our bodies ſhould be parched and burned vp with heate: but howe fell it out? forſooth we hadde not a more vnkindly ſommer many yeeres, in reſpect of extraordinary colde, neuer leſſe inclination to warre, no Prince deceaſed in that time, and the plague which hadde



### *A defensatiue against the payson*

beene somewhat quicke a while before in Lumbardyeas God woulde haue it, ceased at the ryfing of the Comet.

Raymundus Vennensis, hauing first bestowed many fauourable wordes vppon the same, after giues this iudgement, that it shoulde bee fortunate vnto himselfe, in respect of neyghbourhood vnto his natyue signe: but vnlucky to all the world &c. and yet I finde not, that eyther he was richer by one grote, or the world the poorer by one halfpenny. Beside, Astrologers themselues affirme, Cometam esse astri filium, that a Comete is (as it were) the childe of a Planet: but a Planet offendeth not all the world alike, but those quarters onely that lye vnder him, therefore no more doth a Comet. I will not say that the last blazinge starre dyd come of cold, but of heate, I thinke no wise man will suppose it came, that noteth first the coldnesse of the sommer next before, the great aboundance of all frutes, and the Northren windes which purified the ayre, and nipped of all offensive vapoures that might tende to putrifaction. But Lord how little would it further theyr conceits, concerning warres or death of Princes, rather then of priuate men, although we should confesse, that Comets were contagious and pestilent to nature, vnlesse they can bring prooffe withall, that Princes are not made of earth as others are, or that the father and creator of all thinges, appoin- ting them to rule and gouerne reasonable creatures, which in the ful- nesse of his mercy we are created to the likenesse of himselfe, shoulde make them rather then theyr subiects, slaues and vassales to the bla- zing starres, which proceede of putrefaction.

Thys knotte, not in a rush but in the lyne, whereby they seeke to square out theyr vncertaine aimes, perplexeth them so sore, as imitating Alexander onely in this poynt, they seeke to cutte by sharpnesse of a wreckefull edge, what they are not able to vnlose by the sleight of their diuinitie, pretending, that because the constitution of a Princes body is more delicate and tender, in respect of bringing vppe, then of pryuate men, the feruent heate which commeth from the Comet taketh surer holde, and eyther stirreth and inciteth them to warre, or makes them subiect to the perrill of a burning feuer. If this be not the strongest rea- son, that was euer yet alleaged for perticuler offence by Comets to the state of kynges, by any of the Rabbies of that arte, let no man giue me credite in the rest that I shall deliuer.

For disproofe whereof we must first of all obserue, that whereas wo- men neyther ryde great horses, hauke nor hunt, nor exercise them selues in feates of armes or chiuallrie, which are the meanes which Princes of all times haue vsed, for encrease of strength and refreshing of theyr stud- dyes: therefore must they be counted farre more tender and effemi- nate, and by consequent more subiect to the venome of a Comet. If for a further countenance of supposed colours, they deuise to fortifie  
thys

*of supposed prophecies.*

this inference, and make it good (at least) against all Princes of the female kynde, as Demosthenes being demaunded, what was the first, second and third parte of an orator, answered three times with one assured voyce Pronunciation: so will I vouch but one example of thys kynde, because I know no more, which is the Queene our soueraigne, most worthy (notwithstanding) for her excellent and perelesse gifts, to stand for a thousand.

Howe many Comets haue beene seene within these fīue and twenty yeeres, before and after which, her maiesty hath euer encreased, rather then appayred the sound state of her body? I can affirme thus much, as a present witnesse by mine owne experience, that when dyuers vppon greater scrupulosity then cause, went about to dissuade her maiestye, (lying then at Richmonde) from looking on the Comet which appeared last: with a courage answerable to the greatnesse of her state, shee caused the windowe to be sette open, and cast out thys worde *Iacta est alia the dyce* are throwne, affirming that her stedfast hope and confidence, was too firmly planted in the prouidence of God, to be blasted or affrighted with those beames, which eyther had a ground in nature wherevpon to rise, or at least no warrant out of scripture, to portend the mishappes of Princes. Behold a woman and a Queene, which seeme to be the kindes and callings, vppon which the Comets (if Astrologers speake trueth) are wont to pray: and yet not onely shee relenteth not to common feare, but insulteth rather vpon common folly. That the Comets hinder not the lyues of Princes, I haue prooued heeretofore at large, and shall haue opportunity likewise to confirme hereafter, but thus much I dare affirme, that albeit the mallice of the same were no lesse to be feared then some thinke: yet her contented mynde, her harmelesse thoughts, her temperaunce in dyet, abstinence from excelle of all thinges that offende, with moderation of exercise, were inough to veresfy that prouerbe which hath beene rife of olde, *Sapiens domabitur astris*. But to let this one escape as a byrd of Araby (because a multitude of graces and incomperable giftes, haue caused her to be reputed in some sort, as an exception to the common rule) what reason may be vouched, why great Princees should not better arme themselves then Priuate persons, against the violence of heate, which breedeth to great distemper and disorder in our bodies: since we find that the king of Eglon wanted not a sommer parler, nor king David a plesant gallerie, wherein to coole, repose and recreate themselves in the cheefe extremitie? We see beside, that it is a greater wonder among vs to heere of a king or Queene that dyes of the plage, then of a blazing Star, which cannot be ascribed altogether, to the paucity of kinges, in comparison of priuate men: for if the Comets were aswell the causes of the death of kinges, as of the pestilence, it were more like by reason, that both these

Iud. 3, 20.

2. Reg. 11, 7.



### *A defensatiue against the payson*

these daungerous effects proceeding from one certaine grounde, and beeing neither dislincked nor repugnant in theyr finall drift, shoulde concurre and meete together at one season and in one subiect. I coulde alledge also, that Princes are more oft endaugered by cruditie proceeding of ill dyet, then of enflamation by excesse of chollor, and that Hippocrates hath obserued for a certaine rule, *ἐν θερμασίαις καὶ ὕδατος βαρύνει* &c. that those dry seasons, which come not after excessiue store of rayne to breede putrifaction, are most wholsome and lesse subiect to mortality: as for exāple, the yceres of 1555. & againe, 1558. with dyuers other. Moreover, ther are diuers other vents wherby the fumes of chol lor may be sayd to breath out & diuers other accidents into which they may dissolue, beside plague and warre, & though there were none other: yet since Princes seldome enter into war vppon a suddayne heate, without aduise of al theyr wisest and most trusty counsaillers, it skilleth not how little or how much, the Prince himselfe be touched by the beames of heate, so that his counsaile may be free from all contagion of influence, and though both armies were prepared in the field to ioyne, as that of Baiareth against Selimus his sonne, of Edwarde the seconde agaynst the Barons, of the rebelles in the North agaynst king Henrie the eyght, and of Maximilian against the Turke: yet since it pleased God sometime, whē things were furthest out of hope, to cause Isaac & Imaell, Esau and Iacob, David and Absalon to embrace, and one to kisse an other, it were an ouer-great simplicity to thinke, that by the gazing on a Comet (though we should admitte it for a signe) a man might founde the depth of prouidence, which hath no bottome. These answers may suffice to these two reasons, clowted vppe betweene an error in experience, and the blazing of an extraordinary light, touching other iniuries, wherewith this chatting Agar greeueth and molesteth her olde dame: I shall haue opportunity to treate, when I come to trye this kinde of diuination, by the rule of Gods most holy worde. The rest that they are able to oppose or vrge agaynst vs in theyr owne defence, shall be touched in the manner of a glaunse, though in my conscience, I can hardly thinke it woorthy the repeating.

The shallownesse of mens frayle conceites, the feebleness of witte, the distemper of lunacie, the vanitie of dreames, the suggestion of spy rites, and supposed influence of starres and planets, haue beene so farre deiected from theyr seuerall and distincte degrees, as were it not that that our Astrologers, mistrusting least Dianas kitchen should beginne to coole, and the siluer shrine forgoe the wonted glosse by defaulte of offerings, had foysted in deceitfull reasons for the coloure of their arte, which require a quicke dispatch, my further labour might haue beene accounted friuolous. But as it is not inough to build a fort for strength, vnlesse we blow vppe counterpiles, which haue beene rayfed by

*of supposed prophecies.*

by our aduersaries to offende and beate vs with theyr paper shotte : no more will it suffice, that I haue vouched reasons and authorities in disproofe of these vaine toyes, vnlesse I lykewise wrest theyr weapons out of theyr handes, and dismount theyr ordinaunce. They demanda of vs, why they may not as lawfully seeke out the properties of starres, as of metals, stones, &c. I aunswer, that they might as lawfully be sought, if they were as ready to be founde, for where we finde that Salomon is prayfed for his vnderstanding in the simples from the bunch of Hisope to the Pellitory roote that growes out of the wall, it is implied, that wisdom was encreased and augmented by this knowledge : but concerning starres and Planets, we can finde no such report, nor that any man was euer liked or allowed, but abhorred and reiected (as shall be prooued afterwarde) that depended on theyr influence. The simples worke theyr proper and peculier effect in common vse, the starres abuse, the vertue of the first appears by prooffe, the latter is conceiued in imagination, and though that ground of Cicero be true, *Prædict ea posse, quæ natura necessitas perfectura est*, that those thinges may bee foretolde, which nature of necessity must bring foorth in time (as eclipses of the Sunne and Moone, effects of sicknesse in mens bodies, and such like) so must we take it for a principle, as absolute and true in all respects, that no cause vnder heauen can bring foorth an effect, which it selfe hath not conceiued.

Besides, by poring and enquiring in the skye, to seeke for that which may be found out neerer hande : repugneth against true philosophy, by which it is most euident, *Causas quo sunt propiores, eo magis esse definitas*. Some reason, that because the starres and Planets are naturalia corpora, therefore we may take notice by theyr influence &c. But in like manner they might defend all kindes of auguration, or diuining by the flight of byrdes, the inwards of beastes : for aswell one as another may be called *Corpus naturale*, in respect they both consist of matter and of forme, and towching other inspirations of future aimes for any thing I finde, theyr vertues are indifferent. When they can proue the propertyes which are ascribed to the Planets, to be no lesse proper vnto them then they are natural to vs ; their Logicke shalbe better entertayned.

They say furthermore, that the Planets are some causes of our changes and alterations vpon earth, which I admitte : but as they woorke together with the second causes, and make all thinges eyther ripe or rotten, strong or weake, frayle or durable, by an vniuersall force, according to theyr proper kindes and qualities. Thus God is sayd, *Educere nubes ab extremo terræ*, to bring foorth clowdes out of the furdest and extremest partes of earth. *Euocare aquas maris, vt effundant ea super faciem terræ*, to call vppe the waters of the sea, that he may powre

*Psal. 134. 7*

*Ier. 4. 16.*

*Amos. 5. 8*



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

them downe againe vpon the face of the earth, or if we looke into the fountaine of philosophie, it wyll appeare that within a while after Moses had sayde, *Nondum pluisset Deum in terræ*, That GOD had not yet rained vpon the ground: *Exhalauit a terra vapor, qui vniuersam eius faciem irrigauit*. A certayne vapor breathed out of the same, which watered all the face of it.

Gene. 2. 5. 6.

I haue heard a number, which haue gone about to countenaunce their vaine conceytes, by the certayne groundes, and maximes of Astronomy, as if because the Planets holde a certayne course, they must by consequent infuse a certayne propertie: but this double faced Ianus hath no place in our temple. They might as well dyrect vs to the booke of Fortune for our destinie, because we play with dice, or perswade vs that the arte of Magicke is a braunch and member of diuinitie, because the names of God, and those which beare a sounde of greatest maiestie, are so many tymes remembred.

Astronomy presumes no further, then the knowledge of the course and order of the Starres, and how by them the tymes and seasons of the yeere are ordered, and therefore the diuine and holye Fathers of the Church, which embraced this as a kinde of lawfull arte, shooke off that other of diuining by the Planettes; as too vile a strumpette, to consort or liue in fellowshippe with so chaste a virgin: the first was holden as a mirror, wherein man might view the maiestie of God, the second, shunned as a sugred bayte, whereby the deuill seeketh to bewitch the godly. For as it is most free for all men to peruse and reade the woord of God, but not to wrest it to the maintenaunce of Cabalisticall conceyts, to reade the names of Ichoua tetragramaton, Adonai, &c. so we call vpon no damned spirites, to scanne the figures and characters of Egypt, so we coniure not to take profite by the meane, without rushing into desperate extremities; to measure trueth whereas she shines, without regard to shaddowes where they flicker: so may we like of Astronomical, discourse so farre as it is warranted by demonstrations of arte, but after we beginne to iudge by faces, signes, aspectes, &c. Which are imagined by some, condemned by more, and suspected by the most, farewell all certaintie.

They seeke to prooue another waye, that because Astrologie is a collection of sundrie rules or propositions, regarding by conformitie among themselues, the knowledge of euentes to come, therefore it cannot be denied to be an arte, which reason followes not, vnlesse they prooue withall, their rules or propositions to be profitable, lawfull, true and agreeable to nature. The scope and ende of Alchimie, is to transforme grosse mettalles into rich and pure, they want not store of rules and preceptes to this ende, but because this arte would make after a kinde of manner, nor exchange, Innouate, not immitate the course of nature.

### *of supposed prophecies.*

nature as all artes ought to doo: it proueth altogether vaine, and serueth to none other ende, then to blowe the wealth of greedy menne, in clowdes of smoke out of the louer of a chimney. In lyke manner, Geomantie, Pyromantie, Idromantie, Necromantie, Ars Cabalistica, &c. consist vppon a formall course of groundes and rules, but because they cannot abyde the touch of truth, nor iustifie themselves by sensible and certayne prooffe, we reiect and disallowe them with theyr aucthors.

One writeth, that no man ought to be reputed learned in Phisick, without some taste in the Iudicialles: because Hipocrates would haue the rising of certaine Planets, obserued with great heed, &c. But this auayleth lesse, since Galen writeth, that Hipocrates gaue this aduise to none other ende, then that the temper of the season, might be more exactly and precisely taken by this meane, then by accounting by the moneth, because diuerse countries differed in reckoning, without thinking once of iudiciall conceytes, which are more meete for chyl dren, then for men of skyll and grauitie. This appeareth also by the drift and scope of the learned Doctour, referring all his ayme, rather to the cure of the patient by purging, letting blood, or other meanes, then to consideration of his natiuitie. They might as probablie vouch Anicenne, ascribing no lesse care to the climate, vnder which all men are borne, because the countries giue a certayne touch, which ought not to be neglected by a man that professeth Phisicke. Belyke the vessell is almost ready to be set on tylt, when such lyes are drawne out in steede of wholsome licquor: notwithstanding, they wyll not put vp the matter thus, but praye in ayde of diuerse learned men, and of Galen cheefly, about theyr Dies decretorios, concerning which, as matters farre aboue my pitche in phisicke, I submitte my iudgement vnto theyrs, which haue attayned to more certayne knowledge of the trueth, by practise then by speculation. But as we knowe; that Hipocrates left nor so much as one seely blancke, wherein these Decretorie dayes might challenge any place: so diuerse learned writers gather, that Galen who began to note them first, waxed wearie of them in his latter tyme, and they that carrie greatest fame for Phisicke bothe in Fraunce and Italie in our dayes, reiect and disallowe them vterly. Beside, when Galen was most earnest in this poynt, it was but with regard vnto the state and complexion of the patient.

But what meant Hipocrates (say they) to take so narrowe markes by Phisiognomie, if outward signes may not deliuer lyght, of those euent which are lyke to follow? Trulie for mine owne part, I mislike no gesing nor diuining by such signes, as haue Rationem causæ & effecti, of which kinde is the face, as it is noted and obserued by Hipocrates. For though we finde it to be generallie true, which Tullie speaketh against Verres, Frontem atque oculos mentiri, that the eyes and forehead are often found to lye, though Cateline be sayde, Vultum gestasse in



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

them downe againe vpon the face of the earth, or if we looke into the fountaine of philosophie, it wyll appeare that within a whyle after Moses had sayde, *Nondum pluisset Deum in terræ*, That GOD had not yet rained vpon the ground: *Exhalauit a terra vapor, qui vniuersam eius faciem irrigauit*. A certayne vapor breathed out of the same, which watered all the face of it.

Gene. 2. 5. 6.

I haue heard a number, which haue gone about to countenance their vaine conceytes, by the certayne groundes and maximes of Astronomy, as if because the Planets holde a certayne course, they must by consequent infuse a certayne propertie: but this double faced Ianus hath no place in our temple. They might as well dyrect vs to the booke of Fortune for our destinie, because we play with dice, or perswade vs that the arte of Magicke is a braunch and member of diuinitie, because the names of God, and those which beare a sounde of greatest maiestie, are so many tymes remembred.

Astronomy presumes no further, then the knowledge of the course and order of the Starres, and how by them the tymes and seasons of the yeere are ordered, and therefore the diuine and holie Fathers of the Church, which embraced this as a kinde of lawfull arte, shooke off that other of diuining by the Planettes, as too vile a strumpette, to consort or liue in fellowshippe with so chaste a virgin: the first was holden as a mirror, wherein man might view the maiestie of God, the second, shunned as a sugred bayte, whereby the deuill seeketh to bewitch the godly. For as it is most free for all men to peruse and reade the woord of God, but not to wrest it to the maintenaunce of Cabalisticall conceyts, to reade the names of Ichoua tetragramaton, Adonai, &c. so we call vpon no damned spirites, to scanne the figures and characters of Egypt, so we coniure not to take profite by the meane, without rushing into desperate extremities, to measure trueth whereas she shines, without regard to shaddowes where they flicker: so may we like of Astronomical, discourse so farre as it is warranted by demonstrations of arte, but after we beginne to iudge by faces, signes, aspectes, &c. Which are imagined by some, condemned by more, and suspected by the most, farewell all certaintie.

They seeke to prooue another waye, that because Astrologie is a collection of sundrie rules or propositions, regarding by conformitie among themselves, the knowledge of euents to come, therefore it cannot be denied to be an arte, which reason followes not, vnlesse they prooue withall, their rules or propositions to be profitable, lawfull, true and agreeable to nature. The scope and ende of Alchimie, is to transforme grosse mettalles into rich and pure, they want not store of rules and preceptes to this ende, but because this arte would make after a kinde, of manner, not exchange, Innouate, not immitate the courle of nature.

### *of supposed prophecies.*

nature as all artes ought to doo: it prooueth altogether vaine, and serueth to none other ende, then to blowe the wealth of greedy menne, in clowdes of smoke out of the louer of a chimney. In lyke manner, Geomantie, Pyromantie, Idromantie, Necromantie, Ars Cabalistica, &c. consist vppon a formall course of groundes and rules, but because they cannot abyde the touch of truth, nor iustifie themselves by sensible and certayne prooffe, we reiect and disallowe them with theyr aucthors.

One writeth, that no man ought to be reputed learned in Phisicke, without some taste in the Iudicialles: because Hipocrates would haue the rising of certaine Planets, obserued with great heed, &c. But this auayleth lesse, since Galen writeth, that Hipocrates gaue this aduise to none other ende, then that the temper of the season, might be more exactly and precisely taken by this meane, then by accounting by the moneth, because diuerse countries differed in reckoning, without thinking once of iudiciall conceytes, which are more meete for chyldren, then for men of skyll and grauitie. This appeareth also by the drift and scope of the learned Doctour, referring all his ayme, rather to the cure of the patient by purging, letting bloud, or other meanes, then to consideration of his natiuitie. They might as probablie vouch Auicenne, ascribing no lesse care to the climate, vnder which all men are borne, because the countries giue a certayne touch, which ought not to be neglected by a man that professeth Phisicke. Belyke the vessell is almost ready to be set on tyll, when such lyes are drawne out in steede of wholsome licquor: notwithstanding, they wyll not put vp the matter thus, but praye in ayde of diuerse learned men, and of Galen cheefly, about theyr Dies decretorios, concerning which, as matters farre aboue my pitche in phisicke, I submitte my iudgement vnto theyrs, which haue attayned to more certayne knowledge of the trueth, by practise then by speculation. But as we knowe, that Hipocrates left not so much as one seely blancke, wherein these Decretorie dayes might challenge any place: so diuerse learned writers gather, that Galen who began to note them first, waxed wearie of them in his latter tyme, and they that carrie greatest fame for Phisicke bothe in Fraunce and Italie in our dayes, reiect and disallowe them vtterly. Beside, when Galen was most earnest in this poynt, it was but with regard vnto the state and complexion of the patient.

But what meant Hipocrates (say they) to take so narrowe markes by Physiognomie, if outward signes may not deliuer lyght, of those euents which are lyke to follow? Trulie for mine owne part, I mislike no gesing nor diuining by such signes, as haue Rationem cause & effecti, of which kinde is the face, as it is noted and obserued by Hipocrates. For though we finde it to be generallie true, which Tullie speaketh against Verres, Frontem atque oculos mentiri, that the eyes and forehead are often found to lye, though Cateline be sayde, Vultum gestasse in



### *A defensatiue against the poyson*

manibus, to haue carried his countenance in his hand, and though wee reade in Tacitus, that the Malcontentes in Galbas tyme, Tristitiam simulabant contumaciae propiores, pretended sorrowe, when they drewe more neere vnto stubbornnesse: yet is it certaine, that some diseases are woont sooner to discerie theyr poyson in the visage, then in any other parte, and cheeflie those of the lyuer. Peucer would be glad to make a freind of Galen, in knitting iudgement by the Starres to skill in Phisicke, but that famous Doctour is too peremptorie to be lured in with glozing wordes, for not onely during all his tyme of contemplation and studdie, he disdayned to spend any wastfull tyme about such toyes of tyckle hold, but declaymed bitterlie in the cheefest heate of his practise at Roome, against certaine spightfull fooles, which finding themselves farre vnable to compare with him, in iudging of the causes and effectes, of sundrie distempers and diseases that were rise, published abroad, that he neither wrought nor iudged so much by the rules of arte, as by dyrection from the Planettes. Beside, he giueth a most deadly nippe to Peucer and his fellowes, in one place aboue the rest, where he noteth, that none of those which vndertooke to diuine of the state of sicke men, by the Starres and Planettes: whyle he practised at Roome, gaue in an vncorrupt, a true or a certayne iudgement.

I was acquainted once with a proper scholler, who declining from the course of Phisicke, wherein he was reasonable entered, to gaze on Charles his wayne vppon the toppe of a steeple, became more fitte at length to ryng a bell and driue a carte, then cyther to giue a diet, or prescribe a medicine. It is vnpossible (say they) to set downe a reason of so different effects, as are deriued from the sunne and moone, without ascribing certayne qualities and properties to the places of the heauen, by which they passe: as though effects of Planettes might not differre by three sundrie kindes of alteration, that is, cyther of the agent in respect of distaunte, or of the patient by infirmitie, or of the meane by distemper, or of altogether if we lyst to make a mashe of accidentes, and though the dogge dayes be enforced as a backe set to this cause, yet must we make the Starre it selfe to be no cause at all thereof, but the strength and vertue of the sunne, depending in his greatest glorie so long ouer vs.

If we chaunce to tell these Starre dinners of theyr chyldishe lyes, de-lyuered abroad by rate of Almanackes from yeere to yeere. they seeke to shifte and escape away by demanding, whether the rules of nauigation be not certayne, though the Pylote fayle sometime? I answer, first that it is one thing to swertue by default of cunning in the man, another for want of certaintie in the compasse. A Pylote may be led awry by mistaking of his marke, a Phisitian by an alteration in the body, vpon a sudden accident vnlooked for, a Generall by deceytfull scoutes:  
but

*of supposed prophecies.*

but the difference and oddes betweene these payers is very great, for heere the men are ouerseene, but in diuinations by the Starres, the rules of arte it selfe are friuolous. When we tell them that neyther Plato nor Aristotle (where the matter laye most fitlie for theyr hand) vouchsafed once to name, much lesse to warrant or allowe diuining by the lyghts: some aunswer, that eyther they were ignoraunt thereof, or slyly sought to couer so diuine a misterie, with a vayle of silence. But this cloake of couine, needeth some old patch out of the fripperie to peece it home, for neither is it probable that our Astrologers see more then those Philosophers, nor that Aristotle and Plato traauyling into Egypt, with so great a care, to marke, would ouersee the knowledge which was most diuine: but rather in respect, hee glaunceth at a blinde Philosopher in his Meta-phisickes, for depending ouer-much vpon the trifles of this glozing arte, whose follies farre surmounted any fauour that the world could reape. I thinke he let it slippe away in a clowde of slie contempt, as Solon dūd the cryme of parricide, before men were acquainted or defyled with the same: Ne non tam prohibere, quam admonere videtur, least he should not seeme so much to barre the fault, as to giue light of such a matter.

Cicero pro  
Rosc.

But to march forward, and proceede against theyr forlorne hope, when wee vouch Aristotle, to prooue that it is vnpossible for any certayne knowledge, to be gathered of things which are brought to passe, by the concourse of sundry loose & disynited accidents, they scorne exceedingly, attempting to repell this shotte by certaine courtines of new found philosophie, and affirming against all the schooles, that pouerty, sicknesse, sudden death, &c. should rather beare the name of adherents, then of accidents, because they cleaue vnto the subiect, and haue a certayne foundation or ground at the roote of nature. Is not this fayre playe, when to preuent a checke (because it bringeth some disgrace vnto theyr skyll) they confound the game by casting downe the boord, and eyther wyll haue newe menne carued out of hand to serue their turne, or not proceede in tryall of the wager. For with what colour can they call vs poore by nature, which are borne in lybertie, a treasure, as Callistratus that notable ciuilian valewes it inestimable? Then are we enfeofed with that golden gift of reason, whereby man is holden to resemble G O D, and beside made rulars, not onely ouer fyses, fowles, and beastes, but ouer all the world it selfe, as appeareth by Gene. 1. 28. the charter which it pleased God the Father and creatour of all thinges, Psal. 8. 9. to delyuer vnto Adam in his state of blisse, and lykewise by the confirmation of his Prophete. And albeit (as we reade in Iob) man cometh naked and deuoyde of outward helpe into the world, it prooueth him to be no poorer for this cause, then the merchaunt, which regardeth not howe lyttle coyne he carrie homeward in his purse,

X.iii.

because



### *A defensative against the poyson*

because hee shall be sure to finde his granarie, his warehouse, his pastures and his chest replenished. A man may come to knowledge, *Rei per accidens factæ*, of a thing already doone by accident, as a Phisition vnderstandeth in an Inne as he passeth by, that such a friend of his tooke a surfette of some meate or other: but to diuine of thinges, *Per accidens faciendis*, as for a Phisition to giue warning to his patient, that such a day he should not fayle to fall into a burning feuer, by a surfette take by too many cherries, without knowledge of the course of second causes, is not possible. If it be confessed, that no man aliue by the lyght of nature or supplies of arte, is able to descend vnto such strict particulars: I beleue him, and as much in all poynts of the generall without particulars, because the scripture giueth as small comfort touching one as another, and yet Astrologers wyll not seeme ignoraunt in eyther. But most lyke it is, that if it had accorded with the will of God, to deliuer any lyght or gesse of thinges to come: he would haue doone it rather in a glaring sunne, that might giue the glorie to himselfe alone, then in a corner or behinde the curtayne, least we should ascribe some parte thereof to our owne endeuour.

If a woman chaunce to bring foorth fifteene sonnes without any daughter, after all are borne, Astrologers may gesse (if it content and lyke them so) that this qualitie of bringing foorth so many sonnes, is *Quodam modo adherens*, is in a certayne manner adhering to the propertie, of that man and woman matched in the state of marriage together: and yet because not any man but GOD alone conceyueth, whether agreement or disagreement in complexion, some qualitie deriued from conformitie betweene the parents on both sides, in some degree is the cause of this effect, therefore the coniecture of inherents is no surer then of accidentes. We tell them furthermore, that if the Starres or Planettes dyd conueie such qualities together with theyr influence, as they conceyue, then should they worke the lyke effect in beasts, so farre as they were capable. To this poynt they make aunswere with a false supposed ground, that Planettes regard onelie men. But why more then elementes, or then *Cœlum vniuersum*, which worketh in *Omni corpore naturali*, in all bodyes that are naturall? Beside, we see that sundrie beastes, fihe, byrdes and plantes, holde a straighter lincke of kynred and affinitie with the Sunne and Moone, then with the sonnes of Adam. For example, diuerse write that the Elephant giueth a kinde of reuerence to the Moone, by the Larke we know the dawning of the daye, the Marie-golde dooth close and open with the Sunne, &c. Well, they proceede further, and seeke to iustifie theyr cause by this experiment, that rayne and stormes are bredde by that selfe-same influence of Planettes, which causeth a chaunge or alteration in the ayre, &c. and therefore Planettes are not so voide of particular effectes, as diuerse haue

*of supposed prophecies.*

haue beene perswaded. Surely I can not deny but that it likes me very well, to see them thus descende from discourse of Fortune, which is lesse probable to distemper of the season, which carries a more likely colour: but yet I must aduertise them in frendly manner, that the pole of true consideration, is aswell mistaken in this poynt as in the rest, for though the Sunne may be rightly termed a cause efficient, both of hayle and rayne, yet this proceedeth not of influence sent downe, but of vapors lifted vppe, the same congealing in one kinde or other, according to their proper kinde together, with the quality of the place wherein they are congealed. Wherefore, vnlesse it may be warranted, that the Sunne shall euer warme in one degree, or that the soyle shall remaine in one state euer, to receiue the vertue which proceedeth from the Sunne, because the difference of meteors dependeth wholly vpon these assured grounds it is not possible to prognosticate of eyther. Last of all, they alledge *his nat rali quon &c.* that God & nature worke nothing vainly: but what is thys to the purpose? vnlesse they prooue, that there is none other vse in nature of the starres and Planets, then to garnish or disgrace natiuities.

I know that Aristotle affirmeth the lower partes to confine vppon the higher, to this ende, that theyr vertue may be guided by their influence: but his meaning reacheth onely *Ad mundum elementarem*, as appeareth by the circumstance of bordering, beside, his treating onely of the meteors in that discourse, shewes that he meant to proceede no further. Wherefore I meruaile that some of the Germanes sought a shelter by this worke, which rather ouer-throws theyr cause, in respect the Philosopher ascribeth the congealing of the meteors, to the places wherein they rest, without so much as any thought or conceit of a constellation. One of them obiectioneth, that *Mare Persicum* waxeth exceeding rough, at such time as the Sun entereth into *Virgo*, and becommeth calme againe at his approaching vnto *Sagittarie*, which prooues a property. But heerein they are ouer-shorte, for if the generall configuration of the Planets beare a stroke in this, then sometimes when they were affected in frendly sorte, it should fall out otherwise, whereas we finde that course to be vnchaungable. Therefore we must deriue this accident, eyther from the Sunne who worketh diuersly, according to the place from whence his beames discende, or from the water it selfe, which hath aswell (no doubt) prescript and certaine lynes and limnets when to mooue, as the humors of our body. An other reason may be brought, to prooue a certaine interest in Planets, because they that inhabite vnder the Meridian, are exceeding timorous, effeminate, and borne to seruitude. The reason is not, because *Saturne* gouerns there, for the beastes are most couragious in *India*, and the men long lyued where he claimeth equall rule: but when excelsse of out-ward



### *A defensatime against the poyson*

warde heate, drawes out the vertue from the center to the vpper partes, it leaueth in the visage swarfnes, and in the minde pusillanimity. The case is so much the more euident in this respecte also, because in the North it is farre otherwise.

They tell vs that the sea is ruled by the Moone, we graunt it, and in lyke sorte are the seasons by the sunne: but what maketh this to the purpose? when causes are conuerted with effects, we deny no consequēt, and yet I know that deepe Philosophers haue yeelded other reasons no lesse probable of ebbing & flowing of the waters: but because my leysure will not serue nor giue me leaue, to gage all vessels to the bottom that they seeke to set one broche for defence hereof, I will only tell the that to prooue an vniuersall regiment of Planets in all humane things, because the Moone beares rule in tydes, is a fallence from the speciall to the vniuersall.

Melanchton seeketh to breath lyfe into this arte by a common experiment, that children which are borne Octauo menſe, neuer liue, because Saturne, who preuaileth in that moneth, hath blasted them. I answer, that this perticuler assignement of euery moneth, wherein a woman goes with child, to one roning ſtarre or other: is too vaine a fable to keepe credite with the learned. It is true, that sundry hurtful accidēt befal a woman inwardly, about that month, wherewith her tender infant beeing much offended and enfeebled, is the weaker and worſe able to continue. They teach, that all our inundations, plagues, famines &c. proceede from the contagion of the ayre: the ayre receiueth the contagion from the Planets, therefore the Planets are the causes of our misery.

Vppon this poynt we must consider, that as the heart is the fountain of all faculties, and sendeth forth that vertue which must keepe all whole, entyre and sounde: the like is Virtus cœli in the state of all thinges vppon earth, and therefore with as good authority, we may make the heart a cause of our disease, because it giueth life to euery part, or the magistrate & author of mishappes, who keepeth order in all states, as the Planets causes of our harmes, which serue onely to effecte and bring those accidents to passe, which are engrafted and conceiued in the wombe of nature. If some Planets be colde and others whote, how can it be (sayth Haly) but a generall concourse or meeting of one sorte, must be the cause of fluddes, of others bring forth parchinge and vnseasonable heates? &c. But we must obserue, that in the Planets is no kinde of excesse or rage, but a sweete consort which ripens, as the nature of the thing wherein it woorkes is disposed or enclined: and therefore so often as we heare of any iarre, we must impute the same to the foure stringed instrument beneath the Moone, I meane the strife of the foure elements, which though the hand of heauen play neuer so  
sweete

*of supposed prophecies.*

sweet musick, wyl sometime sound out of order. If then the Planets haue a stroke of rule and empyre ouer elementes, it is to staye them within boundes, but not to further or assist theyr violence. If Mars be prince of choller, Iupiter of bloud: it is not to enflame, but to mytigate and qualifie. The proper heate of bodyes susteyneth and conserueth them, the violent and raging heates come not from heauen, but eyther from the matter or the elementes, whose qualities exceede and raunge too farre beyond all scope, to yeld obedience and seruice to the mylde and gentle scepter of the Planettes. Wherefore we may learne by this, to thunne theyr doctrine lyke a Dragons denne, which impute all fayles of nature, all accidentes of fortune, all ouer-sights of errour, all escapes of stubborne wyll, to the rage of influence. These are the reasons, that are vouched by the proctors and abettors of Astrologicall discoueries in theyr owne defence, which I thought good to touch as tyme would giue me leaue, least otherwise our aduersaries in this poynt, might haue complayned of a verditte without an enquiry. I knowe that some of them, haue pylfered certayne other colours and pretences out of the word of G O D, which when I once beginne to looke into, theyr reckless audite shall be corrected, and displaied accordingly. In the meane tyme, I must craue pardon for my long discourse about the iudgement of the Startes, wherein, though many thinges may want to the satisfaction of a searching head: yet am I sure, heere is enough to warrant my contempt, and to disgrace theyr vanitie.

The matter must be touched once againe, and therefore for this time I wyll proceede no further, then to counsell and aduise all well disposed wyttes, to stint theyr gesses in a meane, & alwayes lyke good sheepe giue eare to the voice of theyr owne shepheard, who watcheth for our soules, and giueth warning by the Prophete not to feare the signes of heauen, whereof the Gentyles are afraide: *Quia leges populorum vanae*, because the lawes of those sortes of men are vaine, and theyr receits are lyke the Poticaries boxes, *Quorum tituli habent remedia pixides venena*, whose inscriptions are woont to promise helpe; when theyr contents are poyson.

Iere. 10. 2.

Lact. de fal. rel. cap. 22,

**T**He last braunch or meane, whereby the contagion of vnlawfull prophecies, is conueyed into the mindes of mortall men, is conference with dampned spirites or familiars, as commonly wee call them, which may fitly be compared to thoe prety cubbes, which (as the Prophet speaketh) *Nunc leones facti didicerunt praedam capere & homines deuorare*, Being now growne to be Lyons, haue learned to deuoure menne, and to lye in wayte for theyr booty. Cleombrotus hauing sequestred himsele, from the fellowship of men, and dealinges of the world, for the space of many yeeres (as Plutarke Y. j. writes)

Conference with dampned spirites or familiars  
Eze. 19. 6.



### *A defensative against the poyson*

writes) frequenting onely solitary woods and caues, that by this meane he might acquaint himselfe the better, and become more inward with the Fayries and Satyres: was at the last enformed by the principall of that vngodly crew, that *siquons*, were spirites, which sometymes had dwelt in bodyes among men, and afterward in respect of many greuous sinnes, were fynyed at this penaltie, to wander vp and downe lyke I.yons (as saint Peter sayes) seeking whome they may deuoure, to inspyre by Dreames and Oracles, and to furnishe men which were assigned to that honour, with the gift of phophecie.

2. Pet. 2. 4.

De Origen.

lib. 2. cap 25

This passage (I confesse) is not agreeable in euerie poynt, with that which is affirmed by saint Peter, that God spared not Angelles sinning: but beeing drawne downe by the ropes of hell, delyuered them to bee tormented, that they should be reserued vnto iudgement: nor with that of Lactantius, that they became members of the deuilles garde, &c. but notwithstanding it approacheth neerer (then heathen writers are wont) to the schoole of veritie. I neede not waste good tyme, nor blotte my paper in confuting their vn sensible conceytes: who constantly beleue, that there is neyther any certayne hell, nor shall be spirites tyll the latter daye, because the follies are too grosse and palpable. They might as probablie suppose lykewise, that there were no heauen, for if Sathan be Princeps tenebrarum, as Christ is authour of all lyght: wee must as well determine of a place of torment as of reward, and that foorthwith also, or else the rich man might haue had a longer tyme of respite, and of taking breath before his execution.

3. Re. 18. 27.

Psal. 120. 4.

Beside, there is no doubt, but as God is neuer absent from his flocke that put theyr trust in him, so the deuill (as experience dooth teach) attendeth at an inch vppon his owne deere fauorytes. So soone as God had quite abandoned and forsaken Saule, a wicked spirite tooke sure holde of him: neyther let it mooue the godlie, that the Scriptures call the same Spiritum Domini malum, &c. The euill spirite of our Lord, for he carries not that ryle as a minister of grace, but as an instrument of indignation: euen as in another place the Scripture called sleepe, Soporem Domini malum, nor that our G O D is one of those, which as Elias sayde of Baal, Dormit vt excitetur, was so fast in sleepe, as he had neede to be awaked, or that it is possible for his eye lyddes to slumber or to sleepe that defendeth Israel, but because it pleased him of his aboundaunt mercie, to preferue his seruauant Dauid vnder this darcke clowde, from the malice of his enimies.

This honny maye be gathered out of a Spyders webbe, the rancour of the Serpentes heart is conuerted to the benefite of Gods elect, his poyson turned to restoratiue, and all for the triall and approoued taste of mans obedience to God: for the corne which is not grynded in the myll is eaten vppe with woormes, the ground which is not  
eared

*of supposed prophecies.*

reared, bringeth weedes, the garment which is worne by no man; is a praye for mothes, the purest Steele, without some kinde of exercise, wyll soonest gather ruste, and the sharpest wittes, if they be not set on worke, were wilde and ignoraunt.

But to returne to the discouery of Sathan, it was he that seduced (a) Eue, that undertooke to become a (b) lying spirite in the mouthes of the Prophets, that when the Priest should stande before the face of God, gotte him on his right hand, Vt (c) aduersaretur ei, that he might oppose himselfe against him, and (d) which thrust in with Gods children for a place in his presence, when Iob should be tormented. The spirit which appeared to the forceresse, those that were cast out of possessed men and women which exclaymed against Paule, beside, the difference which our sauiour putteth betweene his reall body, and the spyrtes that haue neyther fleshe nor bloud, declare most notably, that such thinges there are, and they that are incredulous, and wyll giue faith to nothing in this poynt, maye peraduenture feelee theyr sting, before they can be able to descrie the substance. The (e) Gnosticke heretikes which sprang from Carpocrates, dealt openly by magicke. Simon Magus was (f) reprooued in the Actes, and (g) Alexander condemned at Ephesus for coniuring (h) Chrysostome writeth, that the ayre is charged and replenished with a swarme of wicked spirites, which falling from the toppe of happinesse with theyr monarch Lucifer: haue euer since that tyme buffeted the saints, and infested all the godly with theyr traynes and subtilties. (i) Lactantius is of the minde, that the cutting of the whetstone in sunder, which is ascribed by Liue to Accius Nauus, the conducting of the shippe, by the girdle of (k) Claudia the vestall virgine, which before, no force of men could mooue, with diuerse other woonders of lyke weight, were atchieued by familiars, who hauing beene condemned by the iust and righteous G O D, to dygge at the mettalles, studie nothing more, then by what meanes to increase and augment by pollicies, the number of the damned. Sometime they take vppon them such straunge shapes and fourmes, as maye best serue theyr turne: of which kinde the deuill was, when he saluted Eue in the resemblance of a Serpent, and so were they, whome Eusebius tearming (l) Potestates ab oculis seclusas, powers seclused from our eyes, affirmeth to haue beene at the becke and call of Coniurers in the tyme of Constantine, sometime they lye close vnder the signet of a ryng, in readinesse to be employed, according to the neede of him that pawnes his soule for his pleasure, and sometime, though there be a priuie pacte or couenaunt betweene men and them, yet to declare theyr properties and wherein they consist: (m) Nefaria hominum animis iniiciunt somnia, they conuey vngodly and vnlawfull dreames into theyr mindes. &c. Plato confesseth, that from these (n) *παρα μυστικὴν ὁρμη*, &c. All diuination

(a) Gene. 3.  
(b) 1. Re. 22. 12.  
(c) Zach. 3. 1.  
(d) Iob. 1. 6.  
(e) Euseb. lib. 4. cap. 7.  
(f) Acts. 8. 14.  
(g) Socrat. in histor.  
(h) In 1. Thess. hom. 11.  
(i) Lactan. de falsa. sap.  
(k) Liu. lib. 3.  
(l) Euseb. de prep. Euan.  
(m) Euseb. lib. 4. cap. 7.  
(n) In Tim.



1

*S. m. f.*

ited messengers  
false message  
and to Brov.

*sermons*  
*of sage*  
*bro.*  
It were a folly to dispute about the manner or the meane, where the messenger is wicked, or the message false, for though they glauere and dissemble, though sometimes historically, and from the lippes outward they acknowledge Christ to be the sonne of God, and his ministers instructors to the path of lyfe, not of pure zeale, but rather to draw men by so much neerer to the nette, as the sonnes of Iacob called Ioseph brother, though they ment to murder him, Iacob embraced Abner

*of supposed prophecies.*

ner when he gaue the stabbe, Iudas kissed Christ, after he had sold him to the Pharesies for thirty pence: yet it is inough for me to shun theyr haunt, in that they are wont to runne with the deuils erraunde, who was from the beginning, and will euer be, Mendax, et pater eius, a lyer, and a father of leasing. For if a bad tree can not bring forth good fruit, if no simple of Samaria can purge the choller of Ierusalem: no more can any limme of Sathan giue sound counsell or aduise, to those that are regenerate by water and the holy ghoste, in the bloode of Christe Iesus.

2.Re.3.27  
Mat.26.48

*nota*

The counsaile which the false Prophet gaue to the man of God, may serue vs for a warning, how to deale with such kind of ministers. But how paynted, colourable, delicate, or fine soeuer theyr abuses be, me thinks men should be wiser then to apply theyr eares, when they know before hande, or at least may be enstrusted by most sound authority: that neyther Sathan nor his angels vnderstande. Ex scientia propria, what shall come to passe, or know more then is in woorking at that present when they speake, though me by frailty and by shallownesse of sence, be not so well able as they (by their subtiltye) to founde the bottome of concealed misteries. Let them (sayth God by Esay) tell before hande what shall come to passe, and I will beleue them to bee Gods, which prooueth prophecy to be a braunch and member of diuine prerogatiue, and therefore, if the reason, why the miscreants and infidels suppose that the spirits could prognosticate, were onely in respect they tooke them to be Gods: we may be counted more inexcusable by infinite degrees, which beleue them to be deuils, (as in very deede they are) and yet giue eare to theyr intelligence. Non est enim scire, nec inuenire magnalia dei, for it is vnpossible to vnderstande, or search out the mighty workes of God, and againe, future accidents can be reuealed by no messenger, much lesse by these slye pages of Apollos courte, who are as true in these dayes, when they couer and conceale the poyson, of theyr arte, and onely labour to recouer credite in the world, as they were in olde time, when they bleared and abused all the world with Oracles.

Esai.44.7.

Eccl.1.8.

Eccl.8.7.

Now let vs looke into the meanes, whereby the spirites may bee thought to gesse at thinges, to come with any probability. Non enim ea quæ non dum fieri cepta sunt referunt dæmones, quia dominus solus est conscius futurorum, sed quorum conspiciunt in actu initium eorum, tanquam fures sibi vendicant notionem, for the spirits (sayth the learned father Athanasius) vnderstand not those thinges which haue not yet begonne to worke, because God him selfe is onely priuie vnto thinges to come: but like crafty theeuers they challenge to themselues a knowledge of those matters onely, whose beginning they haue seene to tende to that effect which followes. Theyr cheefest meane therefore,

Athan in  
vita Anto.



## A defensatiue against the payson

Take to be theyr auncient experience, so seasoned with obseruation of euent, which haue succeeded oftentimes: as theyr gesses and coniectures (by good reason) must be more then probable. For whereas our lyues are so short, as not onely the Prophet compareth them to the length of a spanne, but our owne experience beside assureth vs from time to time, that when we should be wisest and beginne to iudge by rule, eyther we forget with extreme age, or are swept away with death, those pettie counsaillers haue boddies made of ayre, which maketh the so light, and beside, they remaine most cleere and free from mixture of all carnall qualities, that might abridge or cutte short the time of theyr continuance: wherefore, if aged men be counted wyser for their time, and preferred in respect of theyr experience, which is the false of witte, before the froth of youth, how much rather spirits, which are not onely hore-headed and in veterari dierum, as the Iudges were which lay in wayte to entrappe Susanna, but withall *discreet* that is, as Lactantius expoundes the worde, skillfull in many thinges, comparing all euent and counsailes (since the fall of Lucifer) with the present.

De Orig.  
erro. lib. 3.

There is no doubt, but as we may learne by the same father, it is easie for them to speake like learned men, but true they can not speake: because they neuer learned trueth of him that is almighty. They are ignorant in no kinde of arte, which is the cause why men are prompted with so many wicked principles as are giuen out, to make things probable, which of themselues are peeuissh and ridiculous. Beside, as wee are taught by scripture, that it pleased God to infuse straunge properties into herbes, gummes, mineralles, beastes, mettalles, Plantes, and stones, for the benefite and behoofe of men: so these obseruing both the common vse and secrete vertues of the same, bring many thinges to passe by ordinary meane, which men for want of vnderstanding, Instigante maxime vicio curiositatis &c. the vice of curiosity (as S. Augustine writes) cheefely prouoking them in hope of carnall and false happinesse, ascrib to miracles.

De doct.  
Christ.

Blondus  
In. hist.

The shaddowes and illusions were exceeding straunge, which Sedechias a deceitfull Iewe presented before Lewes the Emperour, so were those before Fredericke the second, Fraunces the first french king of that name of later dayes, and a swarme of others, which are reported by the wryters: neyther ought they to seeme straunge to vs, since the workes of God are farre more deepe and infinite, then that they may be sounded by the witte of man, or comprysed in the narrow compasse of hys memory.

I was present my selfe when diuers Gentlemen & noble men, which undertooke to descry the finest sleighthes, that Scottio the Italian was able to play by Legier du main before the Queene: were notwithstanding no lesse beguiled then the rest: that presumed lesse vppon theyr

owne

*of supposed prophetes.*

owne dexteritie and skyll in those matters. Wherefore if Iuglers maye cast a vayle before our eyes, whose stratagemes are in comparison but playne and grosse: by how much more fine and nimble may we deeme familiars to be, which houer in a clowde and cannot bee discerned? When they seeke to blinde vs, Præstigijs sensum excecantibus, as Lactantius tearmeth them. Who knowes not how straunge a maske of death, Aquavitz burning with baye salte, casteth vppon all the faces of the standers by, so long as the substance of the ayre is infected by contagion of the vapour: I make no doubt, but Laban was perswaded in his heart, that Iacob caused all his Lambes to speckle and appeare with partye colours, after the bargayne was concluded priuatlye betweene themselues: and yet the Scriptures signifie, that the pyllled hazell twigs (which were layde in the gutters neere vnto the places where the Rammes and Ewes should meete and ioynge together, were the causes of the accident, for hwith what assuraunce phantasie taketh holde, of all impressions that are made in the tyme of breeding or conioynging, the Philosopher himselfe can teach vs in his poblems.

Gen. 3. 37.

This I speake according to the course of nature onely, without any kinde of intermixture with the prouidence of God, which worketh aboue the course of reason. Againe, Rachel hauing learned that Man-dragoras was a singular and speciall thing, to cause women to conceiue, was contented for the same to depart with her husband, to her sister for one night, &c. If then the spirites vnderstand these thinges, and greater thinges then these, why should we not beleue, that they are able to inspyre a knowledge of the same, by dreame or otherwise? As if it were atchieued by themselues, and afterward to giue a lykely gesse, by marching and comparing simples, with the state and preparation of the subjects wherevpon they are to worke, what successe wyll followe. And as for deceyuing of the sight, I count it easiest of all, for if the deuill were neyther vnable, nor afraide to represent a figure of all the world, to the eyes of Christ our Sauour vpon the mount neere to Ierusalem, with all the royalties and principalities belonging to the same (although the least of them could not stand or bee conteyned in so straye a room) howe much bolder dare he bee with vs, and howe much sooner are wee lyke to bee deceyued with his colours? I speake not of theyr trickes, in altering sometyme the sence, sometyme the meane, sometyme the object, and sometyme all three together, casting and dispearling diuerse fumes and vapours, by which we are mooued to misdeeme of things that are subiect to the sences, ouerseeing what indeede we see, and yet thinking that we see what we doo not.

Gen. 30. 35.

Matth. 4.

Another meane, whereby the spirites are more able to giue warning touching thinges to come, is supposed to consist in the qualitie of the place, from whence they looke. For as the Sentinell, who kept the watch,



### *A defensatiue against the poison*

warch, espied the Poste that hasted to the King, before all other (though desires in this poynt were alyke) so there is no doubt, but flickering a losse, and noting what is doone in euery parte and quarter of the world, the spirites maye more easily diuine, and giue aduertisement by sleepe, or otherwise accordingly. Againe, because the spirites are not clogged with this vnweldy lump of fleshe, which not onely taketh off our edge of witte, and sincketh vs more deepe into the drossie mould of earth, then were expedient for the sharpnesse of our sence, but stynteth vs beside to certaine lymittes and degrees, in bringing great effects to passe: wee must allotte vnto theyr share a farre greater sleight of agilitie and nymblenesse, in remoouing hastily from one coaste to another, and by consequent in bringing newes with greater speede, then eyther Fraunces the Poste, or any other whatsoeuer in the world can carry.

Iodocus de Rosa was woont to saye, that he would put none other messenger in trust with any cause of weight, then him that lodged one night at Constantinople, and the next vnder his signet. The spirit Orthon brought intelligence out of all corners of the world, to Gaston Earle of Foix (as Froizard writes) though not by prouidence, but by celerity. Such another had that woorthy Socrates (in whose prayse Platon bothe spake and wrote so much) who brought him dayly warninges and aduertisements of perylles that were imminent: not that his knowledge was diuine or absolute, but rather by remouing from one corner to another, found the plots and pyt-falles which were addrested and prouided by his enimies. The spirite or familiar, which dayly called vpon Alaricus (as he related to a certayne godly Moonke) to begyn his voyage toward Roodne, came from the deuilles courte vndoubtedly: who finding the weakenesse of that quarter after long debate by ciuyl warre, drew the tyraunt thither for the spoyle and murder of the godly. For example, if we demaund intellygence concerning the state of any freend of ours, in Germany, or any other place, as in what sort he spendes his tyme, what enterpryse he takes in hand, or when it is most lyke he wyll returne: the spirites are there with a trice, and taking fyrst a viewe of his estate and exercise, then keeping well in minde his speeches, and those lykewise of his freendes, they cast an eye to the meanes of preparation which he makes, eyther to remayne or to set forward. This beeing doone, and hauing lincked one probabilitie to another, it wyll not be harde, eyther to bring a true report, or at the least so probable vpon these groundes, as men wyll take encouragement to be made fooles at another tyme, in the lyke manner. If the question arise about the cutting of a purse, it is not harde for some of these vngodlye spyrites, which inspyre the theefe first with this intent to steale, taking notice of the fact, obseruing with great heede and dilligence, what plotte the theefe setteth downe to scape away: and beeing priuie, eyther to

Soc. histo.  
lib. 7. ca. 10.

*of supposed prophecies.*

to the spending or bestowing of the money, it is not harde (I say) for them to descry the persons by one meane or other. If we demaunde of them, what shall betyde the Princes or great men, that are yet in health? They take in hande to iudge by scanning of theyr diet, exercise, and soundnesse of the vitall partes within, by the freendes or enemies which laye plots, eyther for theyr sauegard or theyr ouerthrowe, &c. If when they are not well at ease, sometyme they wayte in his Cabnette, another whyle they lystn to the iudgement of the learned touching the disease, and at the length delyuer out an answer, for the feeding of theyr clients hope, which hath beene clouted vp of many probabilities. But marke howe sundrie and vnstable theyr coniectures are, for if eyther hee that meant to returne homewarde out of Italye chaunge his wyll, or GOD forgieue the sinne of sudden death, as he dyd to Ezekias, or any other accident occurre, which was not thought off when the preparation was made: all which they haue tolde is false, and all that they can promise is a fable. The spirites can diuine no further then the disciples, which supposed that the storme would haue deuowred, bothe them and the vessell wherein they were: but Christ made bothe the winds and waters to retyre at his warning. They can but gesse with husbandmen, that such a Fyg-tree, standing in a good place for receyuing of the sunne, and beeing planted in a fruitfull ground, is lyke the next yeere to beare: but after it is blasted by the breath of GOD, and that his word hath warranted, that no fruite shall growe thereon for euer, farewell imagination.

Matt. 8. 26.

Matt. 21. 39.

Mat. 21. 43.

They can but feare with all the marriners, that when the tackle hath beene rent and torne, the shippe cannot continew long: but hee that gaue so many soules to Paule, is able to defeate theyr probabilities. And this I take to be the cause, why they that depend vpon the credite of those lymmes of hell, are so fowly and so often bleared and abused, in the comfort or discomfort of theyr enterprise. Moreouer, they diuine sometyme at moodes and passions of our minde, according to the likelihood or measure, whereby we seeme to discouer and bewraye the same in outward shewe, as for example, if a man be redde in the face, they thinke it procedes of anger, if pale, of enuie, though these signes be fallible: and therefore saint Augustine hauing written in his former workes, that spirites were able to descrye the conceyts of men, Non solum voce prolatus, sed & cogitatione conceptas cum signa quædam ex animo exprimantur. Not onely after they had been delyuered by voice, but conceived in our thoughts, so farre as signes bewray the minde, &c. He repeateth it againe, affirming, Rem occultissimam se dixisse, maiore asseueratione quam debuit. That he aduentured vpon a matter that was exceeding profound and secrete, with greater boldnesse then he ought: for whether certayne tokens be deliuered to them, which are obscure

Acts. 17.

De dini.  
dam. cap. 3.

Aug. Retra.  
lib. 3. cap. 30

A a. j,

to



## *A defensatiue against the posson*

to vs, or whether by a spirituall discoverie they come to knowe those things, &c. Aut difficile potest ab hominibus, aut omnino non potest inueniri, Eyther verie hardly or not at all, it can be found out (sayth he) by men that are mortall.

- Thus timorous, warie and respectiue was this learned Father, least any man might erre by mistaking his conceite, in a matter of verie slight account: whereas nowe a dayes, a number are so rash and peremptory in deliuering theyr groundes abroad, as if they could not erre at all, or suddaine wordes might be receiued as approued oracles. Well then, since Cæsar wept vpon the sight of Pompeies head, and Annibal is sayd to smile at the time of his cheefe disgrace: we may be bolde to conclude Dissimulare frontem, that the forheade which is holden for the seate of shame, can dissemble vpon cause, and that God beeing the true and onely searcher both of hearts and raynes, it is not possible for any moore to know what is in man, then Spiritus hominis qui est in illo, the spirite of the man himselfe which is within him. The last, and
- 1. Cor. 2. 11.** (as I thinke) the shrewdest meane, whereby the spirites enter into credite with the worlde, by giuing warning of euent to come, is, when they tell no more then falleth to theyr part to execute: for as the blessed angels are spiritus administratorii, ministring spirites, for their behoofe whom God hath called to the state of grace, so the deuill wyth hys blacke garde, are the meanes and instruments which God hath vsed and imployed in all times, as the scriptures teach, eyther for the tryall of the godly, or the chastisement of the wicked. Ego creauit interfectorem ad disperdendum, for I (sayth he) haue created him that killeth to destroy, not by infusing mallice, but by tounring wicked meanes to the glory of his kingdome.
- Heb. 2. 14.**
- Esa. 54. 16.**
- Gen. 2.** We may not say that God made Iudas an vnthankfull man, Vidit enim cuncta quæ fecit, et erant valde bona, for he sawe all thinges which he had made, and they were exceeding good: but after he had founde (according to the sentence of the Prophet) that perdition began to flowe from the fountaine of his owne corrupt conceites, it pleased God of his abundant mercy to permitte, that this pricking thorne should be chaunged, and transfourmed to the crowne of immortality.
- Iob. 1. 12.** Well, to proceede with that which I haue nowe in hande, the deuill hauing receiued warrant from the mighty one of Israell, to visite and afflict whatsoener Iob possessed in the worlde, so that he stretched not forth his hande vpon him selfe: might haue hunted for the title and credite of a Prophet, by giuing warning before hande, that such a daye the Sabes should driue his cattaile into forraine landes, and make haucke of his ministers, that an other day his flockes of sheepe should be consumed, with a flash of fire falling downe from heauen, and that a mighty storme shaking the foure corners of the Pallace, wherein hys
- sonnes

*of supposed prophecies,*

sonnes and daughter were feasting, the fourth day should crush them all to dust, all this he might haue signified, as well in that respect which I haue tolde before, as because stormes, windes, and mettelles of fire, are neere adioyning to his dwelling place, and yet we see, that neyther hee foresawe more then was in himselfe to send, nor persisted any longer in this wrekefull course, then it pleased God to suffer.

The spirit, which had lycence at another tyme to preuaile against Achabs prophets, might haue discovered beforchād, with how many sundry sutes of lyes, they should endeour to deceiue the King, because himselfe was in Ore omnium, in the mouthes of all them, and yet it had been no great matter cōsidering the case, & that God himselfe by sufferance, not satan by prerogative, is sayd, to haue sent the spirit of lyes into the mouthes of all the prophets. Quoties enim alicui populo, vel vrbi aliquid mali impender, spiritus se id facturos oraculis, vel prodigiis pollicentur. For so often (sayeth Lactantius) as any mischeefe hangeth ouer a people or a Cittie, the spirites vndertake to worke this by themselves, that men by buylding Temples, making sacrifice, &c. to them, maye depriue GOD of his honour, casting an outward flourish and apparence, as if it laye in them, eyther to abate or aggrauate, whereas in very deede, they are teddered and tyed lyke an ape to his clogge, and as saint Augustine noteth, dare not digge one inche deeper, then the stint of their dyrection. Their cheefest interest is found to consist in this, that Quoniam spiritus sunt tenues & incomprehensibiles, insinuant se visceribus hominum, & occulte in visceribus operiuntur, Because they are thinne and incomprehensible spirites, they insinuate themselves into the bowelles of vs men, and within the same are couered. Last of all, those Angeli mali, bad angels, by whome God sent downe the wrath of his indignation vpon Egypt, might haue arrogated the woonders to themselves, and vaunted many dayes before the mischeefe came to passe, what reuell they would keepe, &c. Though the case concerned them in no sort otherwise, then as hāg-men, or publike executioners of iustice, after the sentence is pronounced. Against this principle, that the deuill can tell nothing (because he knowes nothing) that is absolutely future, they maye perhaps obiect, that he knewe Christ to be the sonne of the lyuing God, which is not true, for then he would neuer haue made a prooffe, by tempting him with pompe of outward shoves, whether this were he or not, that should destroy the glorie of his kingdome. Beside, it could not be verified, which is affirmed in the Scripture, that the mystery of his comming was concealed, A seculis & generationibus, from ages and generations, nor saint Paule should haue beene one of the first, that had reuealed that wisedome of the euer-lyuing God, Quam nemo principium huius seculi cognouit, Which none of the Princes of

3. Re 22. 20.

De Orig.  
err. lib. 2.

Lact. ibid.

Psal. 77. 54.

Matth. 4.

Col. 1. 25.

1. Cor. 2. 1.

Iohn. 14. 5.

A 2. 11.

shie



## A defensatune against the poyson

Iohn. 14. 5.

this world have no part in him: if the deuilles had beene throughlie instructed, in the course and order of his comming.

*Yes that y<sup>e</sup> deuille  
knew not christ  
for he dyed!*

Acts. 8

Gene. 3.

Esa. 4. 17.

Gene 12. 3.

Psal. 109.

Dial. cum.

Tryph. lu-

dæo.

Luke. 2. 51.

Esa. 33. 18.

Why then perhappes some one or other wyll demaunde, what mooued the wicked spyrites, to acknowledge Christ, in sundrye places of the text: and his Disciples lykwise, to be the ministers and messengers of truth: &c. Marry, sayth saynt Augustine, enen as Trysimegestus, bothe might and dyd attend with feare and quivering, the ruine of his blockis at myghty, when he heard the holy Prophetes read, or as Plato was inspyred with a certayne dimme and dusky she lyght, by meeting with some parte of the bookes of Moses, as the learned Fathers thinke, whyle he trauiyled in Egypt. For though the Eunuch could not vnderstand, who was that Lambe which should be sacrificed for the sinnes of all the world before saynt Phillippe (by dyrection of Gods holy spirit) adioyned him selfe and drewe neere to the Coche: yet that they were to wayte for such a Lambe, was playne enough, which made him pawse and muse vpon the matter. The deuilles memorie was not so weake and shallow, as to forget what had beene sounded in his eare so many yeeres before (with greefe and sorrow to his heart) that a womans seed should bruse the serpents head, that the lyne of Abraham should flourish and remayne for euer: that the virgine should bring foorth a sonne, and that the sonne of Dauid should sit on the ryght hand of GOD in his Kingdome: wherefore, hee wanted not iust causes of mistrust to take downe his crest, nor some colours of encouragement also, to content his humour. The Starre which brought the wise men to the crybbe, wherein the babe was layde, together with the melody which Angelles made in heauen, and sheeheardes heard on earth, for the byrth of this diuine creatour and redeemer of mankind, made him sore afrayde, least men awaked with so cleare a lyght, would forbear to rowte any longer in the sleepe of incredulity: but when he looked back, into the playnnesse and simplicitie of his bringing vppe, supposing that a King could not apply the crafte of a feely carpenter, as Iustinus Martyr wryteth that our Saviour dyd, nor the sonne of God subiect himselfe to Parentes, as saynt Luke reporteth that he dyd lykwise, he began to looke aloft agayne as before, and to neglect the myracle. Within a while, it strooke him into another melancholy dupe, to see the greasie Doctors of the Synagogue, so deadly shaken and ratiaculously put to silence, by a chylde of twelue yeeres of age: misdoubling least this might be the Prophet, which should confound the wisdom of the world, &c. But when he found him subiect to the passions and infirmities of fleshe, Excepto peccato, excepting onely sinne, his courage beganne to kyndle, and his spyrites to reuiue with a better satisfaction, The woorthy commendation which saynt Iohn the Baptist gaue to Christe, professing himselfe to be his minister and fore-runner to prepare his waies, and withall the

voyce

*of supposed prophecies.*

voyce of God agnizing him from heauen, to be his onely son in whom he tooke delight. Yea caused him to quiver and shake from top to toe, and so much the more, because the very words themselves, accorded in so sweete a tune with the voice of the Prophets: but imagining that so great feare, as Christ pretended, by eschewing and auoyding warily the trappes, which were set for him by the Pharesies, was not agreeable with so diuine a maiesty, as was expected both from a king and a son of God, he recouered and waxed strong with hope, that his owne date was not yet expired. Afterwarde, he was amazed and perplexed wonderfully, with the casting out of deuils, not in the name of Belzebub the prince of hel, but of that euerliuing God, which causeth both heauē and earth to tremble with the terror of his looke, and putting all those glozing Oracles to silence, which had so long bewitched men with shaddowes of diuinity, according to that place of the Prophet, *Præualebit Deus aduersus eos &c.* God shall preuaile against them, and shall roote vpe all the Gods of the nations vpon earth, and euery one of them shall worshippe him from his owne place, euen all the Ilandes of the Gentiles, and againe, *Perit memoria eorum cum strepitu.* the memory of them hath perished with noise &c. but when he founde howe redily without resistance, and how louingly without reproche, hee yeelded his sweete body, to the shamefull and dishonourable death of the crosse it selfe, there is no doubt, but out of that vessell full of Vineger which stode by the crosse, life was flashed into his face, and whatsoever reason prooued Christ to be a man (as in very deede he was) serued for an argument to Sathan that he was no God, though he be sure both nowe and in the latter day to find him so. Last of all, the laying of his body into earth, and casting of a mighty stone vpon the graue to keepe him downe, made all the deuils in the burning lake to smile. But after they had scene his soule in hell, and vnderstoode according to the promise of the Prophets, that it should not tarry there, but resumming the same body which it had before, ascende to heauen, & possesse the kingdome which was prepared for him by his father before all worldes: thys was the gripe that pinched to the quicke, and burst the gall of him.

This beeing plaine and euident, I wonder how the deuils groping in the darke, can serue theyr rounes, that labour onely to blow life into the carcase of this damned race, which geueth a proud cheeke, not onely to Princes in theyr counsaile, but to God in his prouidence. It was objected in S. Augustines time by some, that forasmuch as God permitteth these familiars, to giue warnings in some sort, we may conceiue that he misliketh not the same, by which slye reason we may likewise iustifie swearing, disobedience, adultery &c. because vpon a mercifull and tender care, to waite for our repentance till the last, he gaue

Mark. i. 11.

Soph. 2. 11.

Psal. 95.

Iohn. 19. 29.

*Christ  
John in hell*



## A defensative against the poyson

order that the Cockell should be suffered to growe together wylh the Wheate, till the time of haruest. We see, that diuers haue been punished for like offences in this life, and therefore if this argument be good, Cur permittit Deus ista si displicent? why doth God permitte these things if they displease? it is as forcible in all respects on that other side, Cur punit Deus ista si placent? why doth he chastise these things if they do not discontent him?

Iob. 33. 15,

Lactan. de  
Orig. err.

1. Reg. 18.

1. Cor. 3, 6,

De Origin.  
err cap. 2.

Gen. 5. 24.

Luk. 1. 26.

In defence of spirites, some perhappes will alleadge out of Iob, that when we are sleeping in our beddes, God openeth our eares & instructeth vs with discipline, as though there were no more wayes to the woode then one, or whatsoeuer is exemplified in scripture for the ministry of the blessed angels, whom it pleased God to vse: might be peruered to the countenancing of the wicked spirites, Qui morbos cient homini terrent mentes &c. which stirre vpper diseases, affright the mindes of men with dreames, distemper their conceits with lunacie, and by such like meanes inforce them to come vnder the the shaddowe of theyr winges for succor. At the length the Proctors and defenders of this arte, finding themselues altogether voide and destitute of reason whereby to defende theyr cause, appeale to the pretended apparition of Samuel, supposing that aswell the Coniurers of this time as the Sorceresse which dealt for Saule: may call vpon the spirites of those men at the least, (who during life) were most vnblamable in the sight of God and his angels. But marke howe farre these wilfull personnes doo mistake the pole, by which they sette theyr rule, for neyther did this spirite vtter any thinge in all his speeche, which myght not be collected probably by the canuase of a crafty witte, and marching probabilities with skill: neyther was that spirite Samuel, but Sathan in his likenesse, how soeuer diuers of the learned sort haue been deceiued, with an outwarde flourish and apparence of the letter. Wherevpon we finde, Literam occidere. and as S. Ierome writes, though the scriptures glitter in the barke, Dulciores tamen sunt in medulla, yet are they sweetest and most delightfull in the marowe.

For the finding out therefore, of the proper sence and meaning of this place, we are first to note the manner of the womans speech, affirming that she sawe Gods ascending out of the earth, &c. whereas the true Samuel, who knewe no more then one immortall and onely wyse God, was not like to consort with so large a couie. Secondly these Gods which the woman espyed came out of the earth, which prooues the not to be diuine, for as Lactantius hath noted, and to very good effect. Nihil terra humilius nisi mors et infernū, nothing is lower then the earth sauing death and hell &c.

It is sayde of Henoch, that he was (a) taken vpper by God. The Angels Gabriell and Raphaell, were (b) were sent from God, that is from above.

### *of supposed prophecies.*

about. The bosome of Abraham was in so high a place, as the wealthy vormoraunt was fayne to (c) lyft vp his eyes, before he could perceyue the blessed state of happy Lazarus. Christe tolde the Phariseis, that as he descended lyke an Eagle from (d) aboue: so they chattered lyke pyes vppon the ground, and therefore afterward he mounted and ascended to his father. In lyke sort, saint Paule aduiseeth all men that cryse againe with Christe, that is as I conceiue, which hauing mortified their carnall members in the merites of his bloud, are happily restored to the state of grace and hope, from which they fell, (e) *Quæ sursum sunt quærete*, seeke those thinges that are aboue: because euery (f) perfect gyft, descendeth from the Father of all lyght, &c. in whome consisteth the true fountayne of diuine conceytes, and the roote of godlynesse. On the other side, it was assigned to the Serpent as a bytter curse, to walke vpon his brest, and eate (g) earth all the dayes of his lyfe: and the strength of the same Serpent, is affirmed by the Scripture, to bee chiefly in the (h) nauell, which is almost the center of mans body, as the earth is of the world, &c. But about all we maye not forgette, the coniurers which were put to death by Saule, (i) Pythones in ventre habuisse, to haue had spirits in theyr belly. And thy voice (sayth Esay) shal be out of the ground, like him that hath a spirit of diuination. The wise men (as some call them) of Henuria, fro whence these toyes haue beene dispersed ouer all the world, established their arte vpon tradition of an old wiues tale, that a certayne sauadge or wilde man should be taken vp, as husbandmen were earing & manuring of the ground, who first vnder took to prophesie. (k) But *Qui de terra est de terra loquitur, qui de cælo venit super omnes est*, He that is of the earth, speaketh of the earth: but he that cometh from the heauen is aboue all, and in this respecte, saint Iames calleth all wisdom that is opposite to this, (l) *Terrenam, animale, diabolicam*, earthly, sensuall, and deuillish. Wherefore, who-soeuer wyll be credited or regarded in his prophecies, ought to deduct them from the pole, rather then from the center. Thyrdly, for as much as the spirite suffered the King to fall downe, and worshippe him as God without reproofe, it is apparant, that he neyther was nor could be Samuel: for as the Bee wyll neuer gather honny, where the blaste of any Cockatrice hath beene, so G O'D disclaymeth all estates that depriue him of his honour. Therefore when the Cittizens of Listra gaue out a foolish speech or rumor, that certayne gods were descended from aboue in the shape of men, and heerevpon would needes haue adored Barnabas for Iupiter, and Paule for Mercurie, *Quia ipse erat dux verbi*, because he was the cheefe speaker: the blessed messengers of God, in token of theyr deepe detesting honours, that were onely due to God, fell to rende theyr garmentes, and to staye the streames of an vnfaithfull multytude, by publishing theyr humanitie.

The Angell would not suffer Iohn to worshippe him, in respect bee

(c) Luke. 16. 23

(d) Iohn. 8. 23.

(e) Collos. 3. 1.

(f) Ima. 1. 17.

(g) Gene 3. 14.

(h) Iohn. 10. 41.

(i) 1. Sam. 28.

Esai. 29. 4.

(k) Iohn. 3. 31.

(l) Iam. 3. 15.

Acts. 14. 12.

Apo. 19. 12.

Apo. 22. 9.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

(6)  
 1. 21. 22. 1  
 (b)  
 Matth. 4. 10  
 Augustin.  
 epist. 49.  
 1. 1. 10. 10. 2  
 (c)  
 Acts. 12. 22.  
 Socrat. hist.  
 lib. 6. cap. 7.  
 (d)  
 1. 1. 10. 10. 2  
 Aud. 3. 16.  
 (e)  
 1. 1. 10. 10. 2  
 (f)  
 1. 1. 10. 10. 2  
 1. Reg. 28. 6  
 1. 1. 10. 10. 2  
 1. 1. 10. 10. 2

was but his fellowe seruauit in the mistery of truerth, and therefore by the lyke example of inordinate desire of diuine honour, which the deuill vttered to Christ vppon the mount, when he made a proffer to inueste in him the ryght of all the kingdomes of the world, so that hee would but onely fall downe prostrate and adore him: not so much for pride alone, as for disproofe of that diuinitie which he beganne to feare in Christe, we maye conceyue what woofe was cloathed in this simple weede, for as saint Augustine writes, the reuerent humilitie eyther of Angelles or of godlie menne, reiecteth such base kindes of adulation, when simple personnes, eyther vppon ignorance or weaknesse, are most prone to tender them. King Herode, not for procuring (which I cannot finde) but for admitting onely without any checke, the lauishe and blasphemous speeches of that glozing multitude, which compared his rude voyce, with the voyce of God (as Midas gaue sentence on the side of Pan, against Apollo) was eaten vppe with woormes (a notable example to stynt Princes within the boundes of moderation) and the foolish Moonkes which smiled on Theophilus, for affirming that their visages were lyke the face of God, escaped not the rodd of his correction.

If our purpose be to offer sacrifice to GOD, as the Angell sayde to Manue, we must, *Soli offerre Domino*, offer it to God alone: who is a ialous God, and touching poyntes of honour, wyll not bee counterprized or weighed downe by any. If we meane to worshippinge as we ought, we must beware of crauing worshippinge, that is not agreeable. For the deuill laboures not for honour at our hand, because it maketh him more honourable, but our selues more wretched, neyther hath he so great hope to aduaunce himselfe heereby, more neere to the throne of grace, whose case is desperate, as to deiect vs from the scaling ladder of humilitie, whose state is comfortable.

Then must we note, the prouidence and deepe foresight of the holye Ghost, which presupposing at what marke the curiositie of aspyring myndes would ayme, to take away the colours of abuse, resolueth in playne termes, before this dialogue betweene the King, the deuill, and the woman, were in hand, *Non respondisse Dominum regi, neque per somnia, neque per sacerdotes, neque per prophetas*, that GOD would yeeld no kinde of aunswer to the King, neyther by dreames, priests nor prophetes. Wherevpon we gather, that if this spirite had beene of the lawfull kinde, hee would haue vsed silence as the rest had doone, and in respect he dyd not, it is playne he was a counterfeyt. Furthermore, those verie words which are vsed by the spirit to the witch, *Quare inquietasti mee? Why hast thou diseased or disturbed mee? Are an euident and certayne prooffe, that he could not be Samuel, vlesse we would be so simple as to thinke, that the soules of the godly are at the becke and*

deception of the reprobate; that Sathans ministers are able to differ be  
the rest of blessed Sayntes: or that the prophete Samuel (whome God  
so much regarded) beeing no lesse assuredly established in a place of  
ease, then Saul was lyke (so farre as men may iudge) to be dejected in-  
to the pytte of hell; eyther would or could abandone his secure and  
happy state, to content or please the forcereffe, whome bothe the kings  
lawes as yet vnrepealed, had adiudged to the paynes of death, and Gods  
lawes yndispensible referred to damnation. Saint Paule had no great  
reason, to forbydde exceeding (a) sorrowe for the dead, nor to pray day-  
lye that he might be (b) dissolued, and remayne with Christe; nor S.  
Stephen to recommend his (c) soule into the handes of God, nor Laza-  
rus to make account of the bosome of Abraham, wherein saint Luke  
sayes he was (d) comforted, nor the theefe to reioyce in (e) Paradise,  
though Christe were his companion: if theyr condition after this life  
were no more secure and safe, then to be rolled and hurmoyled, checked  
or commaunded at the wyll and pleasure of the reprobate. The Scrip-  
tures teach vs in another sort, that the (f) soules of the iust are in the  
handes of God, that they (g) rest from theyr labours; that they deale or  
entremedde not with any thing, that is archeued vnder the compasse  
of the (h) sunne. They shall neyther (i) hunger nor thurst any more,  
the sunne shall not lyght vppon them, nor any other kinde of parching  
heate, for the Lambe which sitteth in the myddle of the throne,  
wyll guide them to the springes of lyfe, and wpe all teares from theyr  
eyes, &c. To conclude, (k) Renetur pulvis in terram unde erat, &  
spiritus ad Deum qui dedit illum: the duste shall retorne from whence  
it came, and the spirit vnto God who gaue it. In this respect we reade,  
that after once the chylde was dead, Dauid gaue ouer his lamenting,  
because the case was past all (l) helpe, and God himselfe lyke wise tooke  
away Iosias, that he myght not see (m) the greivous plagues and mys-  
eries to come: which had bene vaine, if eyther a sonde forcereffe could  
haue called backe the sonne of Dauid, like a Poste to bring intelligence,  
or Iosias might by any meane appeare agayne, to seeone or view the  
wretched state of his owne countrie. Beside, we finde so great a (n) di-  
stance to haue bene, betwene the rich man and poore Lazarus, as  
none of them could neyther passe nor conuey to other, Ibi (o) enim  
sunt defunctorum spiritus, &c. For the soules of the dead (sayth Saynt  
Augustine) are in a place, where they see not what aduentures happen  
or fall out to men: otherwise, if it were free for them to be present or  
assistaunt at the dealinges of this lyfe, as oftentimes it seemeth in our  
 sleepe: I am verie sure (sayth he) my carefull mother would not leaue  
 mee thus, whome shee followed by so many landes and seas to enioye  
 my company. But as wee maye not plowe with an (p) Oxe and an Asse,  
 weare a garment that is wouen of (q) linnen and woollen, plant a vine

(a) 1. Thes. 4. 13

(b) Philip. 1. 23.

(c) Acts. 17. 59.

(d) Luke. 16. 25.

(e) Luke. 23. 43

(f) Sap. 3. 1.

(g) Apoc. 14. 6.

(h) Eccle. 9. 6.

(i) Apoc. 7. 16.

(j) 17. 18.

(k) Eccle. 12. 7.

(l) 2. Reg. 12. 23

(m) 4. Rc. 22. 20

(n) Luk. 16. 26.

(o) Au. de cura. pro mort. ag cap. 13.

(p) Deut. 22. 9.

(q) with Deut. 22. 11.



## A defensie against the payson

(1) with the diuine leader. *seruo* (1). G. O. D. and manimon, giue vpp our  
 Deut. 22. 9. names to Christe, and entangle our selues with affayres and dealinges,  
 (1) of the world, no more is it lawfull for the Leuites of Ierusalem to seeke  
 Math. 6. 24. helpe in Iericho. *conbut vni non est p[ro]p[ri]u[m] d[omi]ni d[omi]ni vni non est p[ro]p[ri]u[m] d[omi]ni d[omi]ni*  
 If any man demand by the waye, why the coniuers should be so  
 delirious sometymes of our hand, as that famous Bishoppe Anathasius,  
 (in whose lappe our weasyed mother the spowse of Christe, leaned once  
 to take her rest) was accused to haue cutte off the hande of one called  
 Arsenius. *Ex ea ad magicas praestigias inuoluisse*; and that he would  
 haue abused it to coniuering, sometymes one droppe of blood, as the  
 spirite of a witch, whome I my selfe sawe put to death at Cambridge,  
 pressed her with earnest sute, and for want of better earnest of a heare,  
 a poynt, a pinne, with such lyke toyes: I aunswere, that this cometh  
 not because the whisted and dead hande, nor any more able to direct or  
 swaye the soule of him that was owner of it, then the foote of man to  
 rule his head, or the fore-castle of a shippe to guide the stearne, but be-  
 cause the deuill would be glad of any bonde or pledge, that might as-  
 sure him of the soule of man, for which he thyrsteth about measure.  
 The gyft it selfe is naked, *Nisi consensu vestiatur*, vnlesse as the Cui-  
 lins terme it, the same be vested and cloathed by consent, and therefore  
 the deuill craveth rather thy beleefe then thy beneuolence, thy hart then  
 thy hand, thy trust then thy token. The soules of menne sleepe not (as  
 some report) that Iohn the 21. helde in his particular conceyte tyll the  
 latter daye, but so soone as they are cald and discharged from this clog  
 of flesh: eyther they flie vpp to the molintayne (as the Prophete Da-  
 uid speaketh) lyke a hyrde, or beeing heauily depressoed by the weight  
 of sinne, sincke downe to the blacke deepes of hell, the bodyes sleepe in  
 duste, and shall not be awaked, before that dreadfull knell which syn-  
 geth all inne, eyther to damnation or Paradys.  
 Wherefore, I conclude, that neyther soules nor bodyes can appeare to  
 coniuers, but by a figure or a shadowe of illusion, so faire as it maye  
 take a seeming colour, by the practise of our enimie. For who knowes  
 not the deuilles wonted haunt, in frequenting graues and monuments  
 of those that are departed vnto God, as well by that which Tacitus re-  
 porteth, touching certayne gobbettes of dead mennes bodyes digged  
 out of the walles, at such tyme as Germanicus was made awaye with  
 charmes, stamper of leade, as hee halfe burned, and polluted with fowle  
 stinking matter, *Quibus creditur animas numinibus infernas sacrari*,  
 by which it was supposed, that the soules were dedicated to the powers  
 of hell: as by him that (as saint Marke reportes) kept his lodging in  
 the monumentes, and would not be tyed vp in chaynes by any man, and  
 yet he can pretend no clayme or interest, either to the monument which  
 is onely a receptacle, or to the body which was once; and should bee a-  
 gayne.

*of supposed prophecies,*

gayne, a temple of the holye Ghost, but holdeth on this course for di-  
uerse purposes.

The first, is (sayth Lactantius) *Ut sub omnibus mortuorum deli-*  
*tescens, viventibus plagas tendat,* that lurking vnder the names & titles  
of the dead, he may set snares for the liuing. It chaunced after the de-  
cease of a certaine honest gentleman, whom I forbear to name in  
some respects, the deuill appearing first to one of his daughters in hys  
wonted shape, & with a voyce & countenance agreeable, and eftsoones  
to an other, brought the plaine & well disposed maydes into so straunge  
a plight, as would haue greened any man aliue, that had retained in hys  
brest one sparke of charity: and this thing seemed straunge withal, that  
for that time wherein the sight of his apparance haunted them, they could  
aswell tell who was come into the house, what they spake or did &c. as  
any that were present in their copanies. The like story for al the world,  
is written of one Hieronimo an Italian, and likewise of one of the  
Grecke Emperours. Another reason of the deuils howering about  
grauens and tombes, is in respect of his owne delight, for as he was to  
man the first author and impulsue cause of death: so doorth it still  
content and tickle him more then we can conceiue, to rattle among  
the bones and winding sheetes of those, that are layde vppe to sleepe,  
because the same are (as it were) the flagges and drommes of his con-  
quest against Adam.

Againe, by nourishing a false conceite in the mindes of simple and  
vnlearned men, that the soules of the faithfull are not harbored in rest,  
but wander vppe and downe, I can not tell howe many yeeres (as Plato  
in diuers of his workes, and Cicero in the dreame of Scipio sette  
downe) before they can arriue in theyr desired porte, hee gyueth check  
to the doctrine of the gospell touching heauen and hell, and seeketh  
priuily to quicken and reuiue the most blasphemous heresies of Phile-  
tus and Himenaus, who haue erred from the trueth, teaching the resur-  
rection to be past already. Beside, as S. Ciprian dooth note, he seeketh  
by this colour to pretend a kinde of interest and title to the bodyes of  
the dead: whose shadoowes (while they were aliue) haue chased hym  
like an Otter from one side of the poole to an other. The last reason,  
whereby we may gather that this was not the spirite of the true & god-  
ly Samuell, is grounded vppon these words, *Cras autem tu et filii tui*  
*mecum eris;* but to morrow you and your sonnes shall be with mee,  
as an other of that kinde appearing vnto Brutus the night before his  
ende, vsed almost the like kinde of speeche, and promised to meete with  
him the next day at Philippy: where the field was fought, and Brutus  
both slaine and discomfited.

For who can thinke, that Saule hauing not only sinned against God,  
but quite revolted from his feare, and sought releefe by Sorcerers:

Bb.ii.

could

De Origen  
err. lib. 2.

Joq A 1

al. magin O

Int

Jo. M. d.

2. qu.

Jo. M. d.

Jo. M. d.

Jo. M. d.

1. Tim. 2. 25

Plut. in  
Bruto.



## A defensatune against the payson

(1) *witth* (2) *dust* (3) *leades* (4) *serue* (5) *G. O. D.* and *minimon* ; *giue* *oppo* *obr*  
 Deut. 22. 9. *names* *to* *Cherite* *and* *en* *gale* *our* *selues* *with* *affayres* *and* *dealinge* ;  
 (1) *of* *the* *world* ; *no* *more* *is* *it* *lawfull* *for* *the* *Leuites* *of* *Ierusalem* *to* *seeke*  
 Math. 6. 24. *helpe* *in* *Iericho* ;  
 If any man demand by the waye, why the coniuers should be so  
 desirous sometymes of our hand, as that famous Bishoppe Anathasius,  
 (in whose lappe our wearyed mother the spowse of Christe, leaned once  
 to take her rest) was accused to haue cutte off the hande of one called  
 Artemius. *Ex ea ad magicas praestigias inuoluisse* ; and that he would  
 haue abused it to coniuring, sometymes one droppe of blood, as the  
 spirite of a witch, whome I my selfe sawe put to death at Cambridge,  
 pressed her with earnest sure, and for want of better earnest of a heare,  
 a poynt, a pinne, with such lyke toyes : I aunswere, that this cometh  
 not because the whisted and dead hande, is any more able to dreynt or  
 swaye the soule of him that was owner of it, then the foote of man to  
 rule his head, or the fore-castle of a shippe to guide the stearne, but be-  
 cause the deuill would be glad of any bonde or pledge, that might as-  
 sure him of the soule of man, for which he thyrsteth aboue measure.  
 The gyft it selfe is naked, Nisi consensu vestiatur, vnlesse as the Ciuili-  
 ans terme it, the same be vested and cloathed by consent, and therefore  
 the deuill rather than thy beleefe then thy beniuolence, thy hart then  
 thy hand, thy trust then thy token. The soules of manne sleepe not (as  
 some report) that Iohn the 21. helde in his particlar conceyte till the  
 latter daye, but so soone as they are calod and discharged from this clog  
 of fleshe: eyther they flie vpp to the molintayne (as the Prophete Da-  
 uid speaketh) lyke a hyrde, or beeing heavily depressed by the weight  
 of sinne, sincke downe to the blacke deepes of hell, the bodyes sleepe in  
 duste, and shall not be awaked, before that dreadfull knell which tyng-  
 geth all inns, eyther to damnation or Paradise.  
 Wherefore, I conclude, that neyther soules nor bodyes can appeare to  
 coniuers, but by a figure or a shaddowe of illusion ; so faare as it maye  
 take a seeming colour, by the practise of our enimie. For who knowes  
 not the deuilles wonted haunt, in frequenting graues and monuments  
 of those that are departed vnto God, as well by that which Tacitus re-  
 porterth, touching certayne gobbettes of dead mennes bodyes digged  
 out of the walles, at such tyme as Germanicus was made awaye with  
 charmes, stamper of leade, ashes halfe burned, and polluted with fowle  
 stinking matter, Quibus creditur animas numinibus infernas sacrari,  
 by which it was supposed, that the soules were dedicated to the powers  
 of hell : as by him that (as saint Marke reportes) kept his lodging in  
 the monumentes, and would not be tyed vp in chaynes by any man, and  
 yet he can pretend no clayme or interest, either to the monument which  
 is onely a receyte, or to the body which was once, and should bee a-  
 gayne

*of supposed prophecies*

gayne, a temple of the holie Ghost, but holdeth on this course for di-  
uerse purposes. The first is (sayth Lactantijs) *Ut sub speculibus mortuorum deli-*  
*tescens, uidentibus plagas tendat,* that lurking vnder the names & titles  
of the deade, he may set snares for the liuing. It chaunced after the de-  
cease of a certaine honest gentleman, whom I forbear to name in  
some respects, the deuill appearing first to one of his daughters in hys  
wombed shape, & with a voyce & countenance agreeable, and eftsoones  
to an other, brought the plaine & well disposed maydes into so straunge  
a plight, as would haue greened any man aliue, that had retained in hys  
brest one sparke of charity: and this thing seemed straunge wihal, that  
for that time wherein the fitte of his apparance haunted them, they could  
aswell tell who was come into the house, what they spake or did &c. as  
any that were present in their copanies. The like story for al the world,  
is written of one Hieronimo an Italian, and likewise of one of the  
Greeke Emperours. An other reason of the devils houering about  
graues and tombes, is in respect of his owne delight, for as he was to  
man the first author and impulsive cause of death: so dooeth it still  
content and tickle him more then we can conceiue, to rattle among  
the bones and winding sheetes of those, that are layde vpp to sleepe,  
because the same are (as it were) the flagges and drommes of his con-  
quest against Adam.

Againe, by nourishing a false conceite in the mindes of simple and  
vnlearned men, that the soules of the faithfull are not harbored in rest,  
but wander vppe and downe. I can not tell howe many yeeres (as Plato  
in diuers of his workes, and Cicero in the dreame of Scipio sette  
downe) before they can arriue in theyr desired porte, hee gyueth check  
to the doctrine of the gospell touching heauen and hell, and seeketh  
priuily to quicken and reuiue the most blasphemous heresies of Phile-  
tus and Himenaus, who haue erred from the trueth, teaching the resur-  
rection to be past already. Beside, as S. Ciprian dooth note, he seeketh  
by this colour to pretend a kinde of interest and title to the bodyes of  
the dead: whose shadoowes (while they were aliue) haue chased hym  
like an Oter from one side of the poole to an other. The last reason,  
whereby we may gather that this was not the spirite of the true & god-  
ly Samuell, is grounded vppon these words: *Cras autem tu et filii tui*  
*mecum eritis,* but to morrow you and your sonnes shall be with mee,  
as an other of that kinde appearing vnto Brutus the night before his  
ende, vsed almost the like kinde of speeche, and promised to meete with  
him the next day at Philippy: where the field was fought, and Brutus  
both slaine and discomfited.

For who can thinke, that Saule hauing not only sinned against God,  
but quite revolted from his feare, and sought releefe by Sorcerers:

Bb.ii.

coude

De Origin  
err. lib. 2.

Joq. A. I

an. 1591

1. 11

1. 11

2. 11

1. 11

1. 11

1. Tim. 2. 25

Plut. in  
Bruto.



## A defensative against the poyson

could meete with Samuell; a zealous, constant and most holy Prophet in the kingdome of the chosen; but if wee deeme this counterfeite to have beene (as these wordes doe manifestly proude) a pursuivant of Sathan the great fiende of hel: the matters will agree, and no man can picke out a fitter harbinge to prepare the paller of a tyrant. Thus poyson may be drunke in golde, and treason to the holy one of Israell folded vpp in the mantle of hipocrisie. Tertullian abandoneth al those to utter shipwacke both of soule and bodye, that depende vppon the counsaile or direction of familiars. Origen vpon the Iudges, maketh it a thing impossible, *Ut boni magis curminibus obtemperet*, that good spirits should obey the charmes of Magicke, and Chrysostome in a multitude of places, deliuereth so many sound and pithy reasons, in disproofe of all conformity betweene the children of light and the ministers of darkenesse: as may cause proude Lucifer himselfe to blush, and his gird to be ashamed. Wherefore let the spirits watch and prie, iuggle and disguise themselves, sing and flicker as they list; about the monuments as the wicked Arrians, like as the garison of Edipus were wont to giue attendance about churches and church-yardes; least any faithfull Tobias might rake vpp the bodies of the martires wyth a clotte of earth: it skilleth not, for when theyr poyson hath been spent; and theyr malignant humor glutted with many streames of bloude, the spirites of the faithfull shall rest vnderneath the altar, which is Iesus Christ, calling vppon God with endlesse sighes and groanes, for the releefe of theyr afflicted brethren; which attend & looke for like extremities, till neyther Lucifer (whose beames shine brightest in the iudgement of a carnal eie; nor any of his wicked imps) shal be able to diminish any iore of theyr delight, or to disturbe theyr blisse, much lesse to dispose or command theyr service.

Nowe since the matter is of weight, and standeth more vppon this place of Samuell; then any one that hath beene taken, or deuied out of holy writte: let vs try by what pretence or colour they can iustify themselves, which holde this phantasie to haue beene the spirite of true Samuell indeede, and this iacke dawg, which braueth in his pride of painted plumes, to haue beene the right byrde of Arabia. First therefore they beginne to colour theyr conceites, with a reason drawen Ab authoritate, because diuers of the Paraphrasts & Rabbies of the Jewes are of the minde, that it was no counterfeite. An argument of metiulous effecte no doubt, as if we might not iustifie by like authority, that the spirite which was licensed by God vppon earnest sute; to become a glozing spirite in the mouthes of the Prophets, was no minister of hell, but the soule of Naboth: who to wreake his spight vppon the king, that had deprived him both of inheritance and life, was ready to accept and undertake that office; then which dreame, it is not possible for any man

In Apol.

Origen. in  
Iud.

In Math.

cap. 8.

Homil. de  
Lazaro.

Apoc. 6.9

3. Reg. 22.

*of supposed prophecies.*

to thinke of any fable more ridiculous. For though we could imagine, that the soules of godly men retayne a kinde of splene agaynst theyr enmities on earth; that the windes and surges are as gallant in the port as vpon the narrowe seas; or that the Saintes, which are commanded to forgite in this world, (where affections only raigne) should desire reuenge or panish the next: yet that they would attempt to worke it by dishonest and vnlawfull meanes, as this spirite went about, in seeking to deceyue the King with all his bande of Prophetes, is not credible: Wherefore, since as Tullie writes, *In rebus magni momenti, &c.* in matters of great wright, there is no roome for olde wines tales: we must desire them to bring Authours of more credite, or else to desist from brauing, without cyther sound or hope of victorie. Secondly, they stand vpon the verie name it selfe, because in all the chapter, the spirite hath none other tytle then of Samuel. What then? Dooth not God call those things, *Quæ non sunt, tanquam ea quæ sunt*? Which are not, lyke those which are? The names are often wled when things resemble onely and are spoken by comparison. It is not strange, that Sathan can bothe chaunge his colour lyke a Cameleon, and his shape lyke Proteus. Hee spake first in the figure of a Serpent, after by the mouthes of Dragons, Idolles, and seducing Oracles, and now a dayes by the pennes and tongues of heretiques, nay which is more, as the false prophete in Bethel was not ashamed to saye to the man of GOD, *Ego propheta sum similis tui, & angelus loquutus est mihi sermonem Domini*, I am a Prophete lyke vnto thy selfe; and the Angell hath reuealed vnto mee the word of God: so Sathan can transforme his ouglie shape into the figure of an Angell, wherevpon it is not vlyke, that S. Paule aduised ys not to credite any other doctrine, then had beene delyuered before, though an Angel preacked it, &c. Not that an Angel will or can preach any thing that is amisse, or repugnant to the providence of God, (or euer went about it since the fall of Lucifer) but to preuent the deuils sleight and practise by this kinde of figure, who was able to stretch further with his Foxes ease, then his Lyons skinne, and to deceyue more dangerously vnder the fleece of a seely Labe, then with the talloons of an Ospray. The wicked spirit that wrought woonders by Priscilla the blasphemous Montanist, was so fine, as he would oftentimes rebuke apparant faultes, *Vt videretur corrector vitiorum*, that he might be taken for a reformer of abuses. *Quid interrogas me cum Dominus a te recesserit*. Why dost thou enquire of mee (sayth the spirite vnto Saule) when God is departed from thee, or hath giuen thee ouer? Which is in effect as much as I spake off in the last example.

For this cause is it affirmed by saint Chrysostome, *Diabolum de se mentitum esse, &c.* That the deuill lyed about himselfe, and sought to cloke the mallice of his kinde, by thrusting into the company of

Rom. 4. 7.

2. Re. 13, 18.

2, Cor. 11.

13, 14.

Gal. 1, 8.

Euse. hist.

lib. 5, cap. 15.

1. Sam. 28, 16

la Math.



## A defensative against the poyson

those that are religious and well disposed. For though sometimes a canker may be found in a Damaske-rose, a Serpent in a bedde of Marjoramme, and a Iudas among twelue Disciples: yet it is not common nor to be mistrusted, without euident discoverie. The wise man calleth all these vayles and shaddowes of iniquitie, *Magica artis derisus*, the derision or scorne of the arte of Magicke, and saint Paule dooth put no difference, betweene men that giue care to the doctrine of deuils, & those that vtterly forsake the fayth: for though the former hold a certaine colour or pretence of godlinesse, yet they deny God in their dealings. But this spirit, say they, brought no strange or wicked doctrine, but auouched constantly those very messagas, which whyle he was a lyue, had beene deliuered from God by the mouth of Samuel, concerning diuerse sortes of plagues and punishmentes, already due to the Kinges offensees. As though the deuill were not priue to the fynall sentence of almighty God, that the crowne of Israel should be transported from the lyne of Saule to Dauid, and his heyres for euer: when the matter was not hydden or conecaled from the meanest of the people. For as he vnderstoode, what kinde of seede it was that should one daye bruse his head, so lykewise hee could take aduantage of a common brute to deceyue the reprobate. To theyr other fauourable coniecture, that it should be Samuel, because hee vouched and affirmed nothing without the word of God, I aunswere, that it is and euer hath beene, an olde weather-beaten shift of his, to deliuer pilles in pappe, and to shaddowe his most ouglie and mishapen seete, with the long robe of a Pharise. He decoyed Eue with Scit Deus, &c. God knoweth that in what daye soeuer you shall taste of the fruite, your eyes shall be vnseeled, &c. The false prophete of Bethel pretendes a reuelation from God, as wee heard before. In lyke manner Rabsachi, one of the deuilles Colonels, alledging a fayre commission to punishe Israel, and once agayne when all shifts failed Sathan, he assaulted Christe with *Scriptum est*, It is written, &c. Supposing that hee could haue driuen him out of the field by the force of his owne weapon. At another tyme without any calling out, the spirites gaue euidence with Christe, and after with saint Paule, against the scorners and despisers of his woord: though neyther of them would accept theyr testimony.

Thus all the wicked and vngodly prophetes of our age, in lyke manner cleauing to the letter, without regarde to the meaning, beare the standard of our Sauour against himselfe in open feeld: they clappe a lawfull marke vppon a lawlesse prise, and lyke prating Postes carry lyes in theyr lypes, and trueth in theyr letters. Some say that the Preacher, poynting alwayes with the finger to this place, about which we square, affirmeth Samuel to haue prophecied euen after hee was layde to rest: which is a prooffe, that this was a true Prophete, and no counterfeyte.

But

Sap. 17. 7.

1. Tim. 4. 1.

*To Shyft & Sathan.*

Gen. 3. 5.

2. Reg. 13. 18.

4. Re. 28. 21.

Matth. 4.

Ecci. 46. 20.

of supposed prophecies.

But to this I answer as before, that the Scriptures speake not with that force or emphasis, as if they would enuoyne vs vpon payne of deaddle sinne to thinke, that this was the Prophete, but applie thei'r phrase and figure to that forme, which was presented by the forcereffe; although it be not strange, that more then Samuel haue been affirmed in some sort to propheticke, euen after they were dead, in respect the workes and writings which they left behinde them, were able to instruct, and most apte to edifie.

After this manner the rich glutton, seeming no lesse carefull of his freendes then of himselfe, was giuen to vnderstand by Abraham, that they had (a) Moses and the Prophetes, that is, not themselves in person, (sayth saint (b) Augustine) but thei'r volumes, with equiualent authority. Thus Moses is sayd to be (c) read in the Synagogue, though his death were written by himselfe, which is verie straunge, excepting the gyft of propheticke. Et (d) non cognouit homo sepulchrum eius, vique in hodiernum diem. And no man euer vnderstoode the place of his buriall, vntill this present daye, &c. Agayne, we finde that Moses beeing dead, dyd (e) accuse the Phariseis, because the Scriptures which were penned and set downe by him, (f) gaue witnesse of our Sauour Iesu Christ: though a (g) vayle were put vpon thei'r hearts, so oft as he was preached in the Temple. Thus may the storyes of the Church report, that Athanasius had wounded Arius more deeply with his writings, after bothe of them were layde to sleepe, then in the heate of disputation when they mette together, which appeared well by this, that albe it his blasphemous doctrine boyled for a while, like water that is taken from the fire, yet at the length it quailed of it selfe, & gaue place to pietie. To conclude, as well Petrus Lombardus the maister of Sentences, as Samuel, might cause this Epitaph to be engraued on his monument: *Viuus docui, nec cesso docere mortuus, I taught whyle I was alyue, neyther doo I cease to doo the lyke after I am deceased. I am not ignorant, that one of the schoole-men seeketh to take vpon this quarrell by a myddle course, supposing that the darkness of Samuel might appeare without offence, so that the spirite were committed to the fellowship of Saintes, &c. But this is a way rather to cast open then to conceale the former ouer-sight, and to cutte, then to vnloose the knot: for how could Christe be then the first frutes of the dead, or howe could there be but one resurrection, which is recommended in the Scriptures? Beside, if God would not permitte Sathan to stretch forth his hands against Iob, whyle hee was alyue and subiect to the taint of sinne, it is not lyke that he would giue him ouer when he slept in hope, and if a blessed Archangel skirmished against the deuill about the body of Moses, why should we not beleue that it is holy, in respect it was once and shall be agayne, a Temple of the holy Ghost: &c.*

(a) Luke. 16. 29

(b) Aug decura. pro mort. agenda.

(c) Acts. 15. 21.

(d) Deut. 34. 6.

(e) Iohn. 5. 46.

(f) Iohn. 5. 39.

(g) 1. Cor. 3. 15.

Nichol. Gill. in An. nal.

1. Cor. 15. 20

Iob. 1. 12.

Iob. 19. 25.

Iude. 9.

Againe



## *A defensative against the poyson*

Deut. 29. 5

Sap. 1. 2.

Againe it is not like, that God would suffer a Prophet of his owne election, to become an instrument of deceite and abuse; or that the deuill by the finest practise of his arte, was able to restore a body to the former shape, which was long before this time dissolued into dust and ashes. They might aswell defende, that Samuell was layd vppe in hys mantle, because the spirite appeared in that weede; or that the mantle could no more be wasted by the wormes, or woine out with tyme; then the garments of the children of Israell, in theyr weary trauaile to the land of promise were: because we find not the same to haue beene any whit decayed or altered. But thus it comes to passe, as Aristotle writs, *Verbo absurdo concessio sequantur infinita*, that one absurdity being grounded, many more ensue; & the more a Woodcock striueth to scable out of the nette, the more he maffeth and entangleth himselfe with bootlesse labour.

If all this can not satisfie theyr wilfull mindes; which rather pleade for profite then for trueth: yet let them not forget what is affirmed in the booke of wisdom. *Non esse qui agnitus sit reuersus ab inferis*, that no man was euer kowne to haue returned from the deade at any tyme. Belike the wise man neuer read this place, nor took the spirite (which appeared) to be Samuell: although the circumstances were more playne and euident to him that liued neere the time, then to vs that followe so long after. The last and most likely colour, wherewith they seeke to flourish ouer this conceite, is by observing deintily, that whereas Sathan alwayes telleth lyes, and casteth faigned colours to beguile the sence; this spirite first appeared in the shape which was best knowne to all, and then declares and vtters nothing but playne trueth: as appeareth by the falling out of those words (*Cras tu et filij tui mecum eritis*, to morrow both you and your sonnes shall be with me) by the next dayes tragedy.

To this I coulde giue answer, that the very plainnesse of the shape which he pretended at that instaunt to resume, was but a maske, because it was not proper to himselfe, according to the groundes which haue beene layde downe before: but the surest way to satisfy the place is by deliuering the true sence of the pronowne *Mecum* with me; as it standeth in this matter. For if the spirite meant by *Mecum* one and the selfe same place, it is euident that this deuill was concealed in this cload; for what foole will imagine that Samuell a chosen vessel, and Saule a cast away, decaying cleane out of the bosome of the Church, the limbo of Gods fauour, and the skirt of hope, were marshalled in one seat and place of inheritance together. But if wee list to dismitte and interpret *Mecum* onely in respect of death, we must distinguish cyther as it is absolutely future and concealed in the prouidence of God, in which case as (I proued in my former answer) neyther Prophet, Angell, Cherubin,

### *of supposed prophecies.*

Cherubin, or whatsoever creature, be it neuer so diuine or excellent, can disclose the same: or as it was reuealed vnto Sathan as a minister of wrath, who neuer vnderstandeth more then falles to his part to execute, and thus he might be priuie to the course, though no more to the aduantage of his credite, then when the publique minister of iustice is commaunded to prepare himselfe, eyther to behead or strangle an offeuder.

But if we lyst to iudge, that Sathan cunningly comparing all the wrekefull threatens and menaces, which GOD had sent to Saule by the Prophete many yeeres before, with the ripenesse of the Kinges offences, which seemed to be ready for the sickle, the badnesse of his quarrell, with the fauour that protected Dauid, the weakenesse of his part, with the strength and courage of his enimie, adding a recitall of a world of notable examples, concerning men which hauing most ingratfully reuolted from the fatherly protection and defence of GOD to Belzebub, were finally rewarded with the stroke of sudden death, &c. If suting & comparing these misfortunes past with the present state, he deemed that the next dayes battell would be fatall to the King, or if it pleased GOD to send the message of mishappe by Sathan, whome the king bothe serued and esteemed most, that others might be taught heereafter where to plante theyr hope, and what to looke for at the deuilles hand: I wyll not strue, for in such matters as consist in depth or singularitie of sence, there is no doubt, but he that was most subtyll of all the beastes in the fiede, in the tyme of Adam, is increased verie much in that malignant qualitie, by the watch and obseruation of his long experience. Wherefore as we reade in Hesiod, that a spirite called Serapis, gaue warning that a certayne frame would fall, whose priuie fayles hee could more perfectly discern, by peering in at euerie loope and euerie creuise, then the carpenter which onely looketh to the bulke and body of the worke: so might the spyrites easily perceiue the flawes of King Saules estate, by whisking vppe and downe, and giuing care to those encouragements which were suggested by the Priestes and Prophetes (in whome at that tyme the gyfte of prophecie was resident to Dauid, that he might persist in this attempt no lesse acceptable to God, then pleasing to the godlie, albeit I confesse the King himselfe was blinded in so straunge a manner, as he knewe not GOD from Belzebub, nor a Prophete from a Sorceresse.

The conclusion is, that Saule expecting some good tydings at the deuilles hand, to solace and releue his pensue minde, was plunged in dispayre, according to that principle which seldome fayles. In quo peccamus in eodem plectimur. A man may prooue these kindes of prophecie, which haue beene slightly touched and runne ouer in myne answer, by three verie fitte examples of the text it selfe: I meane ey-



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

ther of the diuerse gessing and diuining at thinges, which are meere lye and absolutly future without ayme, or by secrete vnderstanding of the causes which begyn to worke, before they can be seene or searched by the sence of man, or by commission receyued from the mouth of God  
4. Reg. 1. 2. himself to proceed & execute. Of the first kind was that god of Accarō, whose māner was to cast at al, but not to satisfie the least, to lie by rule, and vtter trueth by chaunce: & so were all those glosing Oracles, which were so much esteemed in the regiment of incredulitie. Of the second order, was that Serapis and other of his sute, of whome saint Augustine writes, that finding the ruine of theyr kingdome to approche: gaue warning of theyr owne decaye, that this one trueth which was to followe in despyght of theyr attemptes, might serue for a foyle, to grace the multytude of lyes, which had beene spread abroad so many yeeres together. In the thyrd rancke, we may marshall that vngodly spirite, which was lycensed from the mouth of G O D to seduce king Achab, with his whole swarme of prophets. By these things it appeareth plainlie, that the mantell of good Samuel, is ouer shorte and scant to couer theyr abuse, which presume of any tydings or intellygence from the dead: much lesse is it able to giue men encouragement to proceede in theyr vngodly course, who preferred the toyes that please theyr humour for the present, before the plagues that shall punish and afflict, bothe theyr soules and bodies in the burning lake heereafter.

Aug. de di-  
uinat. dām.

Arte of Ca-  
bolistes.

**T**ouching the arte or grammer, rather of the Cabalistes, which in respect it shooteth at the selfe-same marke that others doo, requir-eth somewhat to be sayde, I finde not by my dilligent regarde in reading, that eyther the fathers, or any others writers of antiquitie, haue mentioned any more kindes thereof then two, concerning which I meane to speake as briefly as is possible. Fyrst therefore we must vnderstande, that immediatly vppon the death of Moses, a certayne secrete sence or misterie of expounding Scriptures, was presumed and imagined by the Iewes, to be left among them as an heyrelome by tradition from the father to the sonne, and for such it was accepted and esteemed (as they write) for the space of many yeeres together. But when the tyme of theyr captiuitie and thraldome was at an ende, and G O D had happily restored them bothe to theyr Temple and their Lawe, the godly preacher Esdras beeing verie loath (saye they) that this referued and concealed vnderstanding should be lost, for default of a faythfull and infallible recorde: caused forthwith seuenthy of the wisest and best learned in the secretes of the lawe, to deliuer bothe theyr rules and knowledge in that kinde, which was digested into seuenthy volumes, and from that tyme forward, bare the name of Cabala.

Heerevpon we are to note, that albeit olde mennes memories might  
sayle

*of supposed prophecies.*

faile, as well for want of exercise, as by surcharge of griefe and care, during the tyme of theyr exyle: yet whatsoeuer they could eyther call to minde or conceyue by gesse, was inserted for a kinde of Oracle. Then that this Cabala, as they termed it, was neuer warranted or aucthorised by any parcell of the Scripture. Furthermore, that many foolish things (as saint Ierome writes) were foysted in and obtruded to the people, vnder this pretended vayle of knowledge and antiquitie. Againe, that the fyrst institution thereof, was not to diuine of thinges to come, but to interprete and expound the letter of the lawe, where the meaning was ambiguous: and last of all, that no man was further bound or charged to beleue this Cabala (not much vnylike the Turkeshe Alchoram, though better to be brooked in some kinde) then they should finde the same to consent to reason. These lymittes beeing warily fore-  
prised and conceyued, I can hardly finde wherein this arte asoordeth, eyther helpe or credite to the Prophetes. Another kinde of mysteric they had lykwise, which consisted eyther in resoluing wordes of one sentence, and letters of one worde that were vnited, or vniting letters of one word, or wordes of one sentence that were disseuered. Thus for example, the Fathers vtter in what sort they flourish about those wordes in the text, Iehouah, Adonai, Sion, Sinaii, Bereschi, and such lyke, supposing theyr conceytes to be deriued from the Prophete Moses: but with lyke aucthoritie, as certayne of theyr fellowes vnder-  
tooke to picke the Iewishe alphabet, out of the Starres and Planets.

Beside, it should appeare by Plato, that this arte was ryse in his dayes, Plato in  
and in lyke manner by Epiphanius: neyther doth it differ much from Crat.  
those prophane & wicked rules of nūbering, which are also much con- Epiphan. de  
demned by the godly. Adde heerevnto, that Ireneus drawes the pettie pōd. vi. mēn.  
degree of Gnostici, and of those brutishe Valentinians (from this abuse  
of elementarie prophecies, as diuerse tearmed them) who made such ha-  
uocke in the Church of Christ, at the fyrst beginning. I speake not here  
against the poemes of the royall prophet Dauid, which are marshalled  
according to the number of the letters, nor against the lamentations of  
Jeremy, wherevnto we maye referre the signe of Tau out of Ezechiel, Ezech. 9. 4.  
and the misteries of α. and ω. in the Reuelation. These figures had Apoc. 22. 13.  
theyr vse and sence assigned to them by the holy Ghost, in which re-  
gard, we yeeld that reuerence and honour which is due: but I declaime  
against the follies of the foolish Iewes of this tyme, and some other  
giddy cocke-braynes of our own, which by the resolution or transpor-  
ting of letters, syllables and sentences, are not ashamed to professe the  
finding out of secrete destinies, that hang ouer all the States and King-  
domes within Europe.

It was my chaunce to speake with one of these in the Court, not past  
six yceres agoe, who by the Lotte of Edom, as it is expressed in the text



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

of holy writte, tooke vpon him to diuine what should beryde the Lowe countries, &c. My desire was first to vnderstand, the groundes wherevpon these toyes were built, wherevnto his aunsweres were so darke and mysticall, as in that poynt onely (if I had beene certayne that the man had vnderstoode himselfe) I could haue counted him a Prophete. First he denied that any thing was reuealed vnto him, by any other meane then ordinary, affirming further, that the Scriptures were not to bee stynted in theyr interpretation, vpon this we were bothe agreed: but the thing wherof I doubted most, was, whether we should rather entertaine his sence, which stood vpo the warrat of a peeuissh wyl, or cleaue to that which had beene euer holden & embraced by the godly. Agayne, whether he were to be iudged a fitte minister, of reuealing these straunge misteries, who neyther was aucthorised & admitted in the Church, as Prophetes of olde tyme had beene, to this charge, nor was able to defend himselfe by myracle: in which two poyntes, he left bothe mee and others very much vnsatisfied.

At length he demaunded of mee, whether I supposed that Antwerpe offending in the same degree, wherein Edom had doon, were not to be corrected by lyke measure? I tolde him, that because it laye not in the power of man, to stynt offences at one certayne fine: therefore wee could not certaynlie determine an equality of punishment. Agayne, though Antwerpe had offended in the same degree with Edom, yet, in respect it pleased God sometyme to spare a wicked place, for theyr (a) Gen. 18. 32. sakes that remayne within the same, sometyme to (b) chaunge the nature of the penaltie, sometyme to stave the (c) sworde when it is at the 2. Reg. 12. 14. poynt to stryke: vnlesse we can perswade the world, that in all Antwerpe, there are not ten honest persons, or that nothing can appease his Gen. 22. 12. wrath but desolation, it is not possible to match these places, as the Ion 3. 10. Schoole-men speake, In identitate supplicij, in qualitie, or rather Identitie, of punishment. We neede no playner prooffe heereof, then theyr example, whose bloud Pilate entermixed with the sacrifice, and againe, of those eightene vpon whome the towre of Silo fell: for thinke you (sayth Christe) that these Galilæans sinned more then all the rest? No, I saye vnto you, but vnlesse you repent, you shall all lykewise perishe. With this, Brocardo, for that was his name, beganne to kindle with some heate, alledging fundrie witnesses of his foretelling what should chaunce to Paris, at the least fye yeeres before the massacre fell out: I told him, that examples which fall out by chaunce, were neuer currant, where the cause was to be iustified by reason: and therefore, tyl he could as readily product a certayne ground to make his gesses good, as score vp a register of blinde euentes, I must rather prayse his lucke, then his learning, for as well might he prognosticate, that the Cocke-pytte in Shoe-lane should sincke the third of Iune, because a Theater fell downe about

*of supposed prophecies.*

about that tyme at Roome, in the raygne of Claudius, as that eyther Antwerpe or Paris should be plagued, by the patterne of Edom or Samaria. We maye be generally taught, by the presidents of Gods righteous iudgements vppon fourmer states, that whosoever sinneth or transgresseth against eyther table of the morrall lawe, shall eyther be corrected by his iustice, or forborne by his mercie: but by whether of these meanes God purposeth, to cure the carbuncle of mannes horrible iniquitie, is concealed from our knowledge, as the King of Ninuie cried out with greuous grones, and therefore were it vaine to gesse what his pleasure is to execute. The safest course is to suspect the wurst, because extremities are due, but yet we can determyne and resolue of neither.

Ion. 3. 9.

After I had fished long for somewhat, that might iustifie so straunge an arte, and caught lesse then a frogge: I aduised him in a charitable sort, rather to followe the sound aduise which was giuen to Origen, by his godly Father, not to wade any deeper in the meaning of holy writ, *Quam apertus illius sensus pateretur*, then the playne and open sence thereof would beare, then by to much trust in bladders, to put himselfe in hazard of sincking vnder water. For if the very Disciples and Apostles of our Sauour Christe, were deceyued in the meaning of those wordes concerning saint Iohn. *Quid si ego volo eum manere donec veniam?* What if I wyll haue him tarrie tyll I come? Howe much lesse should these vaine personnes be regarded, which haue none other warrant for presumption then phantastie. I tolde him further, that such men as he, were charged by saint Peter, with peruertering the Scriptures to theyr owne destruction, and accursed also by the councell of Agatha, for prognosticating hastily what should come to passe in common things: *Ex quauis Scripturarum inspectione, by any slight examination or looking into the Scriptures.* Last of all, I required him to note this poynt, that the greatest part of those prophecies from which he tooke his light, concerning cheefely the bloody schisme betweene Samaria and Ierusalem, and Princes which were not lyke ours, but, circumscribed with theyr owne particular estates, eyther toward God or men, could not be stretched or extended to the Magistrates of christendome. Againe, they were annexed to the scepter of the Iewes, which brake before the byrth of Christe, and ranne vppon the figures of the lawe, which were abolished by the merite of his sacrifice. I knowe that diuerse matters appertayning to the Church, the pride of Antechrist, the daye of iudgement, and such lyke, are yet to be attended and expected by the godly: but neyther hath Brocardo tytle vnto any one of these, neyther can the rest be stretched home by fixeene hundred yeere, to countenaunce his humour. To this he gaue none other aunswere, then that he had too often skirmished with Lindanus, and a number more, to be put from

Euse. lib. 6.  
cap. 2.

Iohn. 22. 27.

2. Pet. 3. 16.

Concil,  
Agath.



### *A defensative against the poison*

his holde by me. His reasons as he said were ouer deepe, to be passed o-  
uer in so slight a sort, and therefore wyllled mee to reade ouer all the  
Prophetes once agayne, before I tooke in hand to checke his skyll:  
which might be rather iustified by prooffe, then confuted with imagi-  
nation. I tolde him, though my reading could not bee compared in  
respect of tyme, with his aged heaires, yet since we lyued in an age,  
which scanneth fancies not by number, but by weight: I would be  
bolde to deeme bothe of his cause and him, according to the measure  
of the reasons which had beene deliuered.

note. Touching Edom, wherevpon our talke beganne, it was not possible  
to make the same a patterne for the fall of Antwerpe, without prouing  
some consent betweene them, eyther in theyr clymate or theyr quality,  
whereas these two differed in bothe exceedingly. That he had skyr-  
mished with Lindanus and the rest, I would not deny, because it might  
be true: but if he could as easily haue brought away theyr reasons for  
enstruction, as he dyd theyr names for glorie, they would appeare to  
be such kinds of encounters, as Zedechias had with Ieremy, the Phari-  
seis with Christe, the deuill with saint Michael the Archangell, and Si-  
mon Magus with saint Peter, wherein the wicked and false Prophetes  
dayly lost some ground, and trueth attayned to the victorie. This is the  
summe of that sharpe dialogue, which fell out betweene the Cabalist  
and mee, which I thought good to set downe, because I neuer chaunced  
eyther before or since that tyme, to meete with any man that eyther  
seemed to defend, or professed to beleue lyke vanities. Touching all  
other branches of diuining craft, whether they be drawne from fire,  
water, earth, or palmistry, which I suppose to be most vaine of all: I  
deigne them not so much as a dash with my penne, but leaue them to  
the scorne and laughter of the learned: wherefore hauing prooued ful-  
ly as I thinke, that neither the modes nor humours which incite men to  
the knowledge of these prophecies, may be permitted to a christian, nor  
the meanes by which the same is sought, defended by a ground of  
trueth: it falleth out by consequent, that whosoever seeketh any com-  
fort or refreshing by the spring of lyfe, must flee from Babylon, and  
shun the filthy drugges of these deceyfull mounte-bancks, now let vs  
prooue another whyle, whether the reasons that dissuade vs from those  
fancies, be as firme as the course it selfe is daungerous.

Profite of  
the reasons.

I Will begin with that assured ground & most inuincible auctority,  
which ought by singular prerogatiue to decide all doubt, I meane  
the worde of God, approouing or reiecting so much of this arte, as  
bringeth warrant thence for prognosticating, *Defuturis contingenti-  
bus* which in effect is nothing. This is the shoot-ankour of an vpright  
conscience, and therefore euery plant, how gallant or how fayre soeuer,  
yea

*of supposed prophecies.*

yea though for beauty it might be compared to that tree, which springing vpp in the middle of the garden, was exceeding pleasaunt in the sight of man, yet if it be not planted by our heauenly Father, shall be rooted vpp: all coynes that are not able to abide this sacred touch, albeit they be curraunt among men, are to be counted cyther of a base alaye, or altogether counterfeyt. He that gardes the cittie of Ierusalem, Matth. 15. 13. Icre. 5. 10. wyll deface the battlements, and shake the flancars of Samaria, that appertayne not to his care, hee wyll subuert all counsayles and deuises of vnsable men, which runne a single course vpon a wanton spurre, beside the cawsey of his absolute and expresse commaundement. The plants of prophecies were neuer deeply rooted in the word, and therefore no maruell though they wyther in the parching beames of trueth, they were not watered with the licquor of obedience, and therefore cannot prosper in the garden of humilitie. God hath neyther promised increase to them, nor good successe to those that leane to them, but storme and hayle, and therefore we may rest assured, that theyr pride is lyke a buble in a running streame, and theyr glorie shall be saued with the bryne of tribulation.

This arrogauit and most insolent presumption, in diuining. Desuturis contingentibus, whose causes are neyther in the thinges whereby we pretend to take our ayme, nor in our selues, maye be compared to that Egyptian captiue, whose head must be shauen, and her nailes pared, before she were permytted once to steppe within the threshold of the Temple, or to the cloake of vanitie, which Ioseph left behinde him in the hand of his wanton mistresse, rather then he would disteyne the duty which hee had professed to his maister, preserving by this meane his soule from linne, his body from offence, and his name from dishonour. These are the Cockatrices egges, which are sitten vppon with feare, and disclosed with unhappynesse. It may be that these allegories may breede offence: but I regard it not, since the learned Fathers giue mee leaue to make honny of the blossomes, so that I nyppe no fruite, and to enlarge the meaning of the text by fitte comparisons, so that the sence (which is most proper and particular) be not abated. That sentence of the Prouerbes, Non est prudentia, non est consilium contra Dominum, There is no prooffe of wisdom, nor of counsaile against God: pincheth Prophetes to the quicke, for albeit they wyll alledge a meaning, free from any purpose or intent to bande or battell against God: yet since it falleth out to this effect, because they tell of many thinges which are repugnaunt to his holy wyll, the snare takes holde of them, wherefore we may be bolde to saye with the Prophete Micheas. The best among the is but as a brier, & he that is most righteous, lyke a thorne in a hedge. For what hath beene decreed in heauen, shall take effect in despyte of arte, and what is not howsoeuer wee diuine, is no more.

Deut. 21. 12.

Exo. 39. 12.

Prou. 22. 3.

Mich. 7. 4.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

more to be feared then a leafe in a meddow. Could God sette downe a more direct and perfect course, concerning such conceits as these, then by charging them not to decline, (which word alone implies a slyding backe) Ad magos to the wise men, or as we terme them, the soothsayers (although I know not for what cause, if it be not in respect they say sooth in nothing) nor to enquire of them for any thing: because him selfe would be their God &c. Adde heerevnto the double blessing which it pleased God to linke and couple with diuining artes, for firste he will oppose his countenance against their drift and after cause them to be slaughtered in the midst of his people.

Againe to draw more neerely to those limiters, which would restrain the bitter curse of God to the Painims onely, getting by the flightes of byrds, the entrailes of beasts &c. We must obserue, that to gesse by the signes of heauen, was an arte as rise among the Gentiles, as by the flight of byrdes: and yet we are enioyned to dispise and scorne these vanities. A signis cœli nolite metuere quæ timent gentes, quia leges populorum vanæ sunt &c. Feare not any thinge from the signes of heauen, (sayth Ieremy) whereof the Gentiles are affrayde: because the lawes of the nations are vaine &c. In deede God sent his Prophets, but not his Planets, to giue warning of his wrath, and therefore we may make them as we list, but without all warraunt out of sound diuinity. Sciebas runc quod nasciturus esses? aut numerum dierum tuorum noueras? diddest thou know then that thou shouldest bee borne (sayth Iob) or diddest thou vnderstand the number of the dayes? no no, these are but toys for babes, and baites of errour, which were not vnkowne to Plato, when he graunted το μέλλον εἶναι, that the future was inuisible, nor to Zenephon in like sort, affirming ἐπὶ τῆς ἀμετρήτης εὐστοίας εἶναι τὰ μέλλοντα προγινώσκειν, that it was about the compasse of our nature, to be priue before hand to thinges that are to come &c.

Againe, to diuine by spirites and familiars, was a practise very common among infidels, and yet it is affirmed from the mouth of God him selfe, that in whatsoever man or woman were found Diuinationis spiritus a diuining spirite, that personne should in Ipso facto die for it: and to prooue the iustice of the quarrell it is further added, that his owne blood should be vpon his head &c. Non est augurium in Iacob, nec diuinationis in Israel, there is no soothsaying in Iacob, nor diuining in Israel, (sayth the Prophet Balaam from the mouth of God) whereby we are to note, that the generallity of the word in that place, is extended aswel to starres and planets, as to byrds or what other kind so euer. Againe, that the chosen & elect of God, were trayned and brought vp from their tender yeeres, in a better course then to gape for flies, appeareth by the warning which God gaue to Moyses, to beware in any wise that none of his, conforme theselues to the customes of the Gentils,

*of supposed prophecies.*

tils, whose inheritance they should possesse, in giuing credite to false Prophets, soothsayers &c. because they had beene otherwise instructed and what was lost by this restraint? when the godly children, which detested all vnlawfull arts as the shipwrack of their soules, hauing none other schoolemaister then trueth, were ten times wiser and of better vnderstanding then all the wisardes in the country, which brought nothing els for warrault of their gesses, saue *Oppositionem falsi nominis scientia*, oppositions of knowledge falsely called by that name, because it is erected and sette vppe against the holy one of Israel. For if no rope of humane reason, be long inough to measure out the streetes of Ierusalem, how much lesse to be extended from one side of heauen to another: since it is not possible inuestigare quæ in cœlis sunt, to serch out those things that are in the heauens &c.

The Prophet Zachary foretelleth, that at such time as God meant to refine and purge his Church, all false prophets shoulde be driven out of the lande: and if any would presume as yet to prophecy, it shoulde be said vnto them by their parents, you shall not liue, because you durst attempt to vtter lyes in the name of God, and it appeareth further, that vpon this checke the Prophets themselues should be ashamed of theyr visions. For howe can they build to purpose, that doo but dawbe with mortar that is not tempered? beholding vanities (sayth the Prophet Ezechiel) diuining lyes and saying thus and thus (sayth the G O D of hostes) when he hath not spoken. To the like effect it is denounced by the Prophet Miche, that night should be theyr vision, and theyr diuination darkenesse, that the sunne should sette vpon the Prophets, and the day were thicke and cloudy ouer them, that shame should fal vpon the Seers, and confusion vpon soothsayers, conering theyr faces: *Quia non est responsum domini*, because theyr answeres came not from God.

The Prophets prophecy lyes in my name (sayth God by Ieremy) I haue not sent them, neyther spake I vnto them: but they prophecy vnto you a false vision, diuination vanity, and the peeuish swaruing of theyr owne heart &c. Againe *Visionem cordis sui loquuntur*, et non de ore domini, they speake the visions of theyr owne heart, and not from the mouth of our Lord, or as Ezechias toucheth them more neere, *Sequitur spiritum suum, et nihil vident*, they followe theyr owne spirite and see nothing, why see they nothing? because it is one peece of Gods diuine prerogatiue, to prognosticate of things to come, he serched the secretes of our hearts, and his counsayles (as we reade in Toby) are not in potestate hominis at mans commaundement. Such prophecies are, none of the square stones, wherewith the Prophet willeth vs to builde but the stones of scandale and offence, which obstruct the conduits of the spring of life, they are no purging, but burning and consuming windes, which destroy the frutes, and suffer no greene plant to prosper

Deut. 18. 14.

Dan. 1. 20.

1. Tim. 6. 20.

Iere. 50. 29.

Sap. 9. 11.

Zac. 13. 2. 3. 4

Ezec. 22. 28.

Mich. 3. 6. 7.

Iere. 14. 14.

Ezech. 13. 9.

Eesai. 46. 9.

Tob. 3. 21.



## *A defensatineaga inst the poyson*

- in the land of promise, they flowe not from the mouth of God, who hath by plaine prouiso saued and reserued to himselfe, the misteries of thinges to come, but from the Deuils apes. *Qui ponunt fortune mensam, et libant super eam*, who sette vppe a table or an aulter vnto fortune, and make sacrifice vpon it. But neyther limping nor lukewarme loyalty, will be accepted by the holy one of Israel, we must eyther serue him alone or not at all: for so great is his ielousie, as while he gardeth and protecteth vs vnder the shaddowes of his holy winges, he will not dispense with our depending on the fauour of his enemy. It is no more possible to serue God and Mamon, Baal and Iehoua, Christ and Antechrist, then to flye both east and west at once, or to sayle with the tyde and against it. For euen as he that toucheth pitch is defiled & disteyned with the same, as he that consenteth to the follies of a strumpet, makes himselfe a member of her body, as he that sawe the theefe and ran with him, was guilty of the theft: so they that please theyr fancies with the glaring baites of Sathans guile, that trust him vnadvisedly vppon hys worde, and therewithal incorporate themselues into the bulke of sinne may beare the name of Icabod as the sonne of Helies daughter did,
- Esay. 65. 10.** Propter translata[m] gloriam, because by this vngodly fact, they haue translated and transported Gods true glory to the Prince of error. Is it then a meruile that where this pryde is generall, so many greuous plagues doo light vppon the sonnes of wrath, Propter duriti[am] incantatorum vehementem, for the vehement & almost inexpugnable obstinacie of the Sorcerers considering it passeth & exceedeth all other offences whatsoeuer, excepting the sin of the holi ghost, & by cutting vs like blasted braunches from the trees of life, prepareth vs vnto that endlesse flame which shall abyde for euer? It was well sayd by Hely, that when one man offendeth against an other, meanes of reconcilment might be found: but if we sinne against the maiesty of God, in this extreme and high degree, who dare presume to pleade for vs? Voluntarie peccantibus &c. For if wee sinned willingly after the knowledge of the trueth receiued, there is not now left any sacrifice for sinnes, but a terrible expectation of iudgement and rage of fire, which shall consume the aduersaries.
- Eccle. 13. 1.** We know that God himselfe, determining to aggrauate the crime of disobedience, compareth it Cum peccato hariolandi, as if there were not any worse to be produced for example. Againe, it is alleadged as a reason against Manasses, to prooue his cleare reuolt from God, that hee put his trust in dreames, attended flightes and abodes of byrds, addicted himselfe to the sleights of forcery, Et habuisset cum Magos et incantatores, and that he had wise men (as we call them) and enchaunters or witches in his company. In like manner, Iulian was no sooner drenched with his cuppe of infidellity in Athens, but he began to breath out
- 1. Cor. 6. 15.**
- Psal. 49. 18.**
- 1. Reg. 4. 21.**
- Esay. 47. 9.**
- 1. Re. 2. 25.**
- Heb. 10. 26.**
- 1. Re. 15. 23.**
- 2. Par. 33. 6.**

*of supposed prophecies.*

out noysome vapours, threatens & menaces against the church of Christ: whereas Saule, so long as he retayned God for his defence, expelled all 1. Reg. 28. 9. sortes of witches and diuiners out of the lande, and Iosias helde it as a thing impossible, to settle and establish on (Omnia verba legis) all the wordes of the lawe, before a quicke dispatche were made of vngodlie Prophetes and theyr wicked exercise. Salomon, who was the wyfdest 4. Reg. 2. 3. King that euer lyued in this world, and beside to be preferred for his skyll and knowledge in the simples before any, neyther dealt with any dampned spirite, nor addicted himselfe to the study of the Starres and Planettes, with desire to become a Prophet. But marke the sleight of Sathan, who mystrusting least it would discredite and disgrace his schoole, that Salomon without taking any kinde of order or degree therein, might be counted wifest among men, hath found a meane to scatter and disperse abroade, certayne charmes for curing of diseases, in the name of Salomon, and by this stratageme to labour, that one science at the least might be grafted vpon the stocke of grace, wherewith for his father Dauids sake, the sonne was inspyred. The reason shall haue aunswere with the rest, when I come to trie the colours and pre- tences which haue bene objected.

Moreover, though king David were a Prophete, and accounted wise, not in a common rate, but Sicut Angelus Dei, lyke an Angell of God; 2. Re. 14. 20. yet is he ly committed to those things that are vpon the ground, sauing when it pleased God to lyghten and inspyre him with a sparke of extraordinary grace, which makes mee woonder at our Prophetes, that presume to flie so braue and high a pitche, aboue the reach of all that went before, vnlesse they had a priuie meaning with Domitian the ty- rant, to paynt out Iupiter with pleasing colours in the market place, and themselves in his bosome. They seeke to qualifie, and in some manner to excuse the faulte, by giuing out in common speech, that they neuer take vpon them to enquire or to resolute of any thing, that is not lawfull in the sight of God, &c. But howe true this is, I leaue to theyr conceyte which are best acquainted with the common practise of the glozing misterie: although to say the trueth, no kinde of secrete that is meere future, can bee counted eyther lawfull in the sight of God, or expedient to the lyfe of man, considering the least of those is sealed vppe in the priuie closette of his knowledge. Can God (who me- tender loue to mankind causeth to be ielouse, and who yeeldeth or re- signeth his prerogative to none) abide that Adam on his of- spring, whose pride is smoake, whose sinnewes shrink, and whose glory tour- neth into duste, should presume to tell before, howe long great men shall liue? In what estate? who shall succede? With many friuolous demaundes of lyke effect, and yet so straunge, as if God himselfe were present with his Arke, we could demaund none other at his hand: but

D d. ii.

what

Tacit. annal.  
lib. 3.

Con. Iouin.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

Annal. lib. 3. what dooth saint Ierome terme them? The vapours of ambition, and Tacitus more rightly if it be possible. Vana, stolidi, vel si mollius accipias, miseranda, Foolishe and vaine thinges, or if we lyst to construe them in more fauourable and gentle parte, thinges rather to be pittied with greefe, then derided with indignitie.

4 Reg. 10. God commanded Esay to tell Ezechias that he should dye, and Ionas in lyke sort to preach desolation to Ninuie: now would I be glad to knowe what our Astrologers, or Prophetes of whatsoeuer kinde, would haue answered about this poynt, if theyr opinions had bene asked or demanded in the matter? To saye that eyther the Cittie or the King should perish, were a lye, because the faulte was afterward remytted vppon a due repentaunce, to saye that eyther of them should be saued or accepted into fauour, were lesse probable, because the voyce of eyther of the Prophetes was so peremptorie, as nothing but destruction and death was lyke to followe: wherevpon, betweene extremities it falleth out, that all theyr gesses are ridiculous, because although we should admitte a signe of wrath, yet styll it is in God to remytte or alter it. The message which was first deliuered, and after called backe by Nathan, driueth them to lyke extremitie. One dreamed that all dreames are vaine, now whether wee beleue this dreame or not, it giueth great exception to the matter.

A certaine high Germane, ouer-much addicted to the maintenance of Starre diuinitie, goes about to prooue the certayntie thereof, by a warning that was giuen to Sauanorola the Frier obseuant, by Bellantius a great Astrologer, that such a yeere he should be put to death for heresie: as though it were so difficult and harde a poynt to bee conceyued beforehand, that men presuming to make warre against the church of Roome, within the bowelles of the same should feele the smarte of Canons and decrees, which correct the meanes of innouation. I could take aduantage also by the slightnesse of theyr credite, which giue out this accident rather by rote (as I suppose) then by record: but because I finde in Guicciardin a thing not much vnlike to this, I wil not stick to graunt theyr vttermost request, that Sauanorola was aduertised of this, and notwithstanding suffered the paynes of death, for first it is most euident heereby, that warnings wyll doo lytle good, because as we read in Tacitus. *Quæ in fati sunt etiam significata non vitantur*, those things which are decreede by destiny, cannot be preuented by intelligence, and then I must enquire of this dutch writer, whether the warning of Bellantius, that the Frier should be put out of the waye for heresie, were true or not, if he affirme it to be true, then must he graunt that doctrine to be heresie, which himselfe, with all his countrie defendeth and maintayneth against Roome, as namely, that the Popes pardons are of no effect, that the Pope abuseth his aucthority, &c. For these were the mat-  
ters,

*of supposed prophecies.*

ters, in defence whereof Sauanorola dyed, if he denye these artycles, to deserue the name or note of heresie, which eyther he must doo, or else confesse himselfe to be an heretike, then is it euident that Bellarmius was very much beguyled, in beleeuing or aduertising that Sauanorola should be sweptaway for vngodly doctrine. The case is passing harde, which driueth a man either to renouice his faith, or to forsake his fancie.

But there is no more parting or deuiding of the stake with God, then with that Lyon, which vnder a morall figure Esope recōmendeth in his fables. One part of vs (which is the body) appertayneth vnto him, in respect he made it out of the molde of earth, another part of more account (which is the soule) he claymeth for the price he payde, which was his sacred bloud, touching the vilest and most abiect parte of all (which is our fortune) if we meane to striue against his wyll, as the Lyon sayde to other beastes, that freendshippe was at an ende: so there is no doubt but he wyl quickly giue vs cause to thinke, that his indignation begins already to boyle in the fornace. For what participatiō hath iustice with iniquitye? Or what societie is there betweene lyght and darknesse? What agreement with Christ and Beliall? Or what part hath the faithfull with the Infidell? What consent is there (a) between the temple of God and Idolles? Wherefore, as saint Iohn would not abyde in one bayne with Cerinthus, nor saint Peter in one Church with Simon Magus, nor the picture of Venus in the Sepulchre: so must we flye from these things, and not disteine our soules with any pelfe that commeth from the dewyll, who bothe is and euer was the cheefe merchant of iniquitye.

The children of Israel had a kind of (b) prophecy among them, that the dayes were prolonged, and the visions should fayle: but God findeth fault therewith, and wyll heare no more of it. Tell them (sayth (c) God) no vision shall be any more in wayne, neyther shall there be any longer flattering diuinations in Israel, for I am God, and wyll speake, &c. The Disciples, as wee heard before, could not be suffered to heare what should become of saint Iohn, and when the people were assembled and gathered together, of set purpose to enquire whether Christ were bent to restore the kingdome of Israell or not: theyr aunswere was, that it belonged at no hand to them, to vnderstand the tymes & seasons which our Sauour had reserued to himselfe, &c. Saint Paule was rapt vp into the thyrd heauen, where he heard such (d) mysteries, as the tongue of man cannot expresse: and yet himselfe cōfesseth, that he went vp bound in the spirit to Ierusalem, not (e) knowing what should there betyde or happen him. The same Apostle hath protested in another place, that he kept nothing (f) backe, that tended to the benefite and behoofe of the church, and yet I would be glad to see but one bare word, eyther in his practise (as S. Luke describeth it) or in his Epystles (as they are penned

Dd. iij,

by

(a)  
2. Cor. 6. 14.

(b)  
Ezecc. 12. 13.

(c)  
Iohn. 21. 21.

(d)  
2. Cor. 12. 3.

(e)  
Acts. 20. 22.

(f)  
Acts. 10. 20.



## A defensative against the poyson

by himselfe) that might giue any light of prophecies. Sometime he was styrr'd vp with the maiestie of diuine secretes, to crie out (g) O altitudo, sometyne by the depth of mysteries, to forbyd the godly (h) Altum sapere: and alwayes ready to admyre with reuerence, rather then to presume with glorie. For if there were a register among the Starres, we neede not seeke the Scriptures for our order, but the Planettes for our fortune, if the thoughts, ententes, and purposes of God, might be foreseee by rules of art, before they publish and reueale themselves in acte by outward meanes: how can God alone be, Scrutator renum, aut cordis agnitor? The searcher of our reynes, or vnderstander of our hearts? Or how could the ground of Salomon be true, Cor regis inscrutabile, That the hearts of Princes are vnsearchable? If Angelles pricke farre, short and wide of this inuisible marke, there is small cause for corruptible men to hope for any lucke, by hobbing and rousing at aduentures. Wherefore, since G O D chooseth the foolish things, and, as it were the cast awayes and refuse of this world, to confront the wisdom of the same, since it is not possible to frequent the schooles bothe of Sion and Samaria, nor to participate both of the table of our Sauour Christ and of deuylles, to consult bothe with the arke and Accaron. I could aduise all sortes of men, to imitate those nouices and firstlinges in the spring of faith, which, after they were grounded on the principles of truth, brought their bookes together, and committed them to the fyre, in the sight of all the world: in which sometyne they tooke a singular deligh, when they gaue themselves to the study of things that were curious.

To this Melancthon answereth, that though the Prophets thundered against auguration, familiars, and other branches of diuination, which were offensive to the preaching of the truth: yet was it no part of theys meaning to disgrace the golden knowledge of the Starres, which is teached by Aristophanes, *in his play the Cloudes*, a diuine or heauenlie science, &c. But this measure wyll not reach home to the marke, for if hee meane with Aristophanes Astronomy, whereof I spake before, I graunt the greatest part of the Fathers, to admitte it as a commendable arte, and so farre the place of Cœli enarrant (borrowed out of the Psalmes) maye be sufficiently warranted: but if he seeke to wrest the sentence of the Poet, quite against his wyll, to mayntayne the iudgement which is taken by the Starres, I meane Godwylling to disproue his ayme, by making it more cleare then lyght it selfe, that theyr Astrology hath doone, and is lyke heereafter to doo, more mischeefe to the Church of G O D, then all those other rotten branches, which not conscience, but very shame, enforceth them to loppe and cast into the furnace. For to beginne with the Planettes, would not the Gentyles smile, if they might suddenly reuiue and see theyr Saturne, Iupiter and

Met-

(g)  
Rom. 11. 13.

(h)  
Rom. 12. 16.

Eccle. 7. 5.  
Pro. 25. 1.

1. Cor. 1. 20.

1. Cor. 10. 1.

4. Reg. 4. 1.

Acts. 19. 19.

Psal. 18. 2.

*fiore in ha  
hadore.*

*of supposed prophecies.*

Mercurie, not onely marshalled in heauen, but also made Authours of health and sicknesse, wealth and pouertie, with diuerse other such lyke accidentes, as it pleaseth God alone to sende, eyther for reward or punishment? Thinke wee that these conceytes, deliuered and preached in the new found landes, would not be meanes to drawe more from the fayth, then the Preachers could inuite with all theyr eloquence? Were the Fathers prayesd for condemning Iupiter and Saturne to the pytte of hell, and shall the true professours of Religion, not onely restore them to the credite which they had without desert, but to the places which they neuer helde from the first beginning? Perhappes it wyll be sayde, that wee regard them but as meanes or instrumentes, whereby GOD bringeth his decrees to passe, whereas they made them gods, &c. But this shyft wyll not serue, vntill we maye presume beforehand of our owne ability, to stynt theyr iudgement within what boundes wee lyst: for when wee graunt an inch, they take an ell, and are most easie to be made beleue, that neyther we would graunt thus much, without we were enforced by necessitie, nor they neede make a doubt of more, where the groundes are euident. This is without all question, a syding or relapsing from the wayes of truth, and a steppe to grosse and flatte idolatrie. Wherefore the waye to keepe our fayth vntaynted, and our iudgement sound, is to conclude with Dauid: Deos gentium esse dæmonia, that the gods of the Gentyles are douylles, and to take great heede, that together with this sugred pyll, wee swallowe not the bayre which infected our fyst parentes with the poyson of contempt, and draue all theyr off-spring out of the ioyes of Paradise.

If the comon soldiers were so precise in old time, that they would not weare a garlande to expresse theyr ioye, because the wicked Idolles and theyr Priests were adorned in that manner: is it lyke they would haue giuen so great aduantage to Idolaters, as to graunt the Planettes, which beare Idols names, to be causes of our accidents? Our Lord forbyd, the case is verie strange for vs to put, and yet more dangerous for any man of iudgement to imagine. If this be not a loope wherby to let in that abhominacion, which is expected bothe to sitte and tirannise in the Church of God before the finall ende: I knowe not what to conceyue or iudge, for as well may we make, not onely Iupiter and Saturne with the rest, but a blasing Starre a god as the Romanes dyd, as beleue them to be signes or causes of so many straunge effectes, as betyde eyther states or Princes. Agayne, how can it but displease the maiestie of God, that the most part of the old Astrologers, whose rules are currant in our schooles, ascribed all thinges in effect to Planettes, without regard eyther to the grace of GOD, which workerh in vs bothe to wyll and to perforce, or to the constancie of Martyrs.

Tertull. de  
Cor. mil.

Phil. 2. 13.

Ptole:



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

- Proleme sayes, that the disposition or inclination which diuerse countries haue, to worship one God before another, cometh, from the constellation. Therefore Iupiter with Saturne (saye they) makes a Iewe with Mars, a Persian adoring fire, with the Sunne, an Egyptian, Colen, tem omnem militiam cœli, with Venus a Saracen, although her milde aspect (in reason) should be thought more lyke to mitigate, then to kindle or inflame the bloody rage of that vile secte, with Mercury a Christian, with the Moone an Antechriste. But Lord howe farre they raunge, as well from trueth, as from theyr owne aucthorities, for if the Planettes had such properties as they suppose, theyr Saturne, in respect
- Matt. 10. 38. it is his manner, Auferre corporalia, dare spiritualia, to deprive vs of thiuges corporall, and giue thiuges spirituall, ought rather to be ours, whome Christe hath charged to forsake the world and followe him, and againe, by giuing almes to make freendes of mammon, that they may receyue vs into the euerlasting Tabernacles. Albumasar perusing Scriptures, rather (as it seemeth) with a minde to cauill, then to learne, is not ashamed to defend, that Moses passed ouer the redde Sea, not by the mighty worke of God (as Dauid thought, when he recounted it among the myracles) but by a dilligent regarde vnto the course and season of the Moone which ruleth rydes, euen as Cor Tacitus, a writer no lesse wicked and blasphemous, in this poynt reports, that Moses found out water in the wyldernesse, by watching and obseruing to what part the wylde Asses vsed to repayre for drinke, not by stryking the rocke, as we reade in Exodus, whereas not onely Iosua went drie shoode ouer the water of Iordā with like facilitie, which had no ryde to be dyrected by the Moone, but the King of Egypt also with his whole army of Astrologers, which were more skylfull and expert in matters of that kinde then the ministers of GOD, were ouerwhelmed with the waters.
- Bonatus found a constellation to figure and prognosticate the flood: Henricus Macliuiensis neuer gaus ouer gaping, on the Starres, tyll hee was perswaded that hee had elpied a shypp, according to the fourme whereof, hee would haue vs to beleue that the Arke was made, and Chrysostome nypeth diuerse that gaue onr our Sauour Christe, to haue beene borne according to the currant of the Starres: because a Starre cōducted the wise men to the place where he remayned with his mother. Are all these Paradoxis aunswerable to the doctrine of a sound beleefe? Or if they bee, what saye they to those cunning men, which by making certaine images, and deuising figures & characters at a certayne tyme, wyll vndertake to ease the tooth-ach, and to remedy diseases much after the same manner: as the Idoll of Iupiter of Memnon, would neuer aunswer any thing that was propounded by the Priest, tyll the beames of the Sunne were bright and blasing in his visage.
- Chrysost. in Matth. 4.
- Iosua. 3. 16.
- Tacitus hist. lib. 3.

### *of supposed prophecies.*

I can not leaue out Ptolomes assurance, that God heareth vs more easily when Iupiter is ioygned with the Moone, although the Scriptures testifie, that in Quacunue hora, In whatsoeuer howre we repent vs of our sinnes, his eares are open: nor that sawcinesse of Cardan, who presumed without eyther certayne knowledge of the minute or allowance of good men, to set vp the figure of our Sauour Christes natiuitie. These things are playne and euident enough, to prooue theyr execrable iniuries against the maiestie and prouidence of God, who make him as it were a vassall to the workes of his owne handes: and once agayne make Iupiter and Saturne with the rest, to iustle and confront the Trinitie.

Now let vs see what reasons haue bene racked and enforced by the prince of error and his cubbes, against the king of glorie, and the scepter of his regiment. Touching the state of the Church vnder the lawe, which was but (a) Pædagogus our schoole-master in Christe; that wee might be iustified by fayth: I confesse that prophecie was ryfe among the Priestes, and leaders of the people. Then was it sayde, if there be euer a (b) Prophete among you, I wyll bee knowne to him by vision, and speake to him by dreame: and in those dayes it was warranted by the Prophete Amos, that God would doo nothing (c) Priusquam reuelaret, &c. before he reuealed this to his seruants the Prophetes. It was an ordinary course among the chyldren of Israell, whensoever they desired to haue vnderstanding of any extraordinary matter, to crie one to another, (d) Eamus ad videntem, let vs goe to the Seer: for so were the Prophetes called in the course of common speech, because they sawe more then the rest, as if we should saye nowe, Eamus ad ignorantem, because they that professe and vndertake to tell fortunes, are commonly the rankest disardes in the countrey. The people receyued Oracles and answers, sometyme by the (e) Priest, sometyme by the (f) Leuite, sometyme by the (g) Arke, sometyme by the (h) Ephod. There was a kinde of vniuersitie for such in Bethell, wherein the chyldren of the Prophetes were so well brought vppe and profited so faste, as they were able to giue warning to the Prophet (i) Elizeus, of the verie daye wherein his maister Elias should be (k) transumpted, and remooued from this weary pylgrimage, as (l) Moses fitly termeth it. Of this consort were they which mette first with Saule (m) himselfe, and after with his (n) messengers, that made pursuite after Dauid, so were the sonnes of Asaph, Qui (o) prophetabant in citharis & psalterijs, who soong Prophecies in harpes and cimballes, and the cobby was so great, as (p) Iehosaphat could no sooner wishe for a Prophete, by whome he might enquire of the wyll of God: but Micheas was at his elbow, and at another time, when the chyldren of Israel were so perplexed and amasell, as they knewe not which way to turne the spirite of God, (q) rushed vpon Ieha-

(a) Gal. 3. 24.  
(b) Num. 12. 6.  
(c) Amos 3. 7.  
(d) 1. Reg. 9. 9.  
(e) Joel. 2. 20.  
(f) Iudg. 18. 5.  
(g) 1. Reg. 14. 8.  
(h) 1. Reg. 13. 7.  
(i) 1. Reg. 10. 5.  
(k) 4. Reg. 2. 3.  
(l) Gene. 37. 9.  
(m) 1. Reg. 10. 5.  
(n) 1. Re. 19. 20.  
(o) 4. Reg. 25. 1.  
(p) 3. Reg 22. 7.  
(q) E c. j. ziel 2. Par. 20. 14



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

(r)  
Iohn. 11, 50.  
Iohn. 18, 13.

Matt. 23, 3.

Iudg. 18, 5.

Prou. 29, 18.

Collof. 2, 17

Psal. 44, 10.

ziel as he stooode among his brethren. The same spirite rested in lyke manner vppon Esay, Jeremy, Ezechiel, Daniel, with all the rest, whose warninges of the plagues which should ensewe, remayne with vs at this daye in record, and neuer fayled tyll after (r) Caiphas: who beeing an vngodly and most execrable tyraunt, in the course and order of his life, yet by the priuiledging of Moses chayre, and quite against his minde (as saint Augustine writes) and as Balam dyd before he prophecied, not onely of conuenience, but of necessitie, that one should dye for the sauing and redeeming of the people, wherevpon wee are to note, that Christ spake not without a ground, in charging all men for the shorte tyme which yet remayned of theyr date, to doo as they spake, but in no wyse as they dyd, Dicunt enim & non faciunt, for they speake (sayth he) but indeed doo nothing. What would we more? The Scriptures note it for a kinde of plague or punishment, when visions were not playne and manifest, & to the like effect is that of Salomon: Cum propheta defecerit populus dissipabitur, When propheticie begins to fayle, the people shalbe scattered. But beside, we may not thinke that all propheticall and inspyred grace, was so lyncked, or rather nayled to the chayre of Moses, but that the Church of Christe (so long as shee was yet luke warme, and as it were enamelled with the precious drops of her spowfes bloud) might make as large account heereof as former tymes, which were but *Vmbrae futurorum bonorum*, shaddowes of the good thinges which were to followe.

The golden age which succeeded next to the passion of Christe, was fittest for this turne, for as the ayre is warmest at the setting of the Sunne, and they that had accessse vnto the secrete places of Appollos temple, were perfumed with a stronger sent of odours, then the rest that stooode abroade: so looke how much more freshly the Disciples reked with the bloud of theyr redeemer, the more abundantly they drew the people to belecue with the gyft of myracles. First, because it might appeare, that albeit it were in the purpose of almighty GOD, to cause the gyfte of myracles and propheticie to cease within a whyle, for reasons which shall be declared afterward: yet was he no lesse able then before, to furnishe the Kinges daughter with the garment of varietie. Secondlie, to winne the weakelings, which are more enflamed with a signe of power, then with the doctrine of beleefe, from their false instructors. Thirdly, to support and settle the young nouices in the waye of trueth, which hauing not, as yet, so deeply spread theyr rootes as afterward they dyd, were easie to be mooued and transported with euery blast of innouation: and last of all, that they which grone vnder the most greeuous yoake and burden of the crosse, might haue a secrete comfort and encouragement, against the mallice of the world and the deuill.

Heere-

## *of supposed prophecies.*

Heervpon, the holy Ghost appearing in the fourme of fierie tongues (a) to all that were assembled, inspired (a) the Disciples and Apostles of our Saviour Christe, with such aboundaunce of rare giftes, as made the world to woonder at theyr maiestie. Thus Agabus declared by the spirite, what a lametable (b) dearth should ouercome the world: and afterward againe admonished saint Paule, of the (c) bondes and chaines that were prouided for him at Ierusalem. In lyke manner (d) saint Philip the Deacon had foure daughters, all inspyred with this gyft, in whome that prophecy of Ioel: that (e) their daughters should see visions, &c. was complished. It appeareth further, by the paynes which were taken by saint Paule, to quench the coales of strife and emulation, that began to (f) kindle in the church of Corinth, of what account the Prophetes were esteemed in thoe dayes, and againe, by that he recounteth (g) Prophetic among those heavenly gyftes which were daylie practised, not in a (h) Babilonicall confusion, which presumed to deuide & quarter Terram vnus labii & eorundem sermonum, a lande of one speeche, and of the same language, but in the Church of God, which retayneth (i) Vnitatem spiritus in vinculo pacis, The vnitie of the spirite in the bonde of peace, &c. Saint Paule was rapte into the thyrd heauen, with such a kinde of appalling and amating in his sence, as hee could not tell whether it were in (k) his body or not: at another tyme, a Macedonian appeared to him, crauing comfort and releefe against that famine of the word of God, whereof the Prophet Amos speaketh. Saint Philip was commaunded after this sorte, to approche vnto the charriot wherein Queen Candaces Eunuch sate, meditating vpon the text of the prophet Esay. The heauens were opened to Stephen, and saint Peter saw the sheete which was let downe from heauen by the foure corners. Acts. 2. 3. (a)  
Acts. 11. 28. (b)  
Acts. 21. 11. (c)  
Acts. 21. 19. (d)  
Ioel. 2. 28. (e)  
1. Cor. 12. 25. (f)  
1. Cor. 12. 1 (g)  
Gene. 11. 1. (h)  
Eph. 4. 11. (i)  
2. Cor. 12. 2. (k)  
Amos. 8. 11.  
Acts. 6. 56.  
Acts. 10. 10.

I confesse moreouer, that in the very next age vnto this, both prophecies and myracles were rise, as appeareth by Ireneus, Ciprian, Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, Egesippus, and the rest of the writers. But since the Cherubin (from whence God promised to speake) is nowe dissolued and quite faded out of memory, together with the priesthood of the Iewes, since the dayes are ouerpast and ouer-blowne, wherein the tender plants of faith had neede of water, tyll theyr rootes were generally spread, now that we neede no longer to be fed with (a) mylke like babes, but haue (as S. Peter writes) a more certayne & sure (b) word of the Prophetes, vnto which we doo well in giuing heed, as to a lyght that shineth in a darke place, vntyll the morning starre arise in our hearts: to craue theyr helpes, when wee are able bothe to walke without a staffe, and reade without a spectacle, were rather to bee taken as a signe of watonneffe, then an argument of constauncie. This (c) generation is a wicked generation, it asketh a signe (sayth Christe) but no other signe shall be giuen vnto it, then of Ionas the Prophete. 1. Cor. 3. 2. (a)  
2. Pct. 1. 19. (b)  
Luke. 11. 29 (c)

E c. ii.

They



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

- (d) They haue (d) Moses and the Prophetes (sayeth Abraham to the rich man) if they belecue not them, neyther wyll they belecue one that should aryse from the dead. The word of God ought nowe to be (e) precious, as it was in the dayes of Hely: *Quia visio non erat manifesta*, Visions or apparitions were not manifest. The vision of them all, is become vnto vs as the wordes of a booke that is (f) sealed vp, which they deliuer to one that can reade, saying: reade this I praye thee, then he shall saye, I cannot, for it is sealed, &c. To conclude the same which God spake (g) diuersely to our Fathers by the Prophetes in these latter dayes, hath spoken to vs by his Sonne, and they are blessed (as our Sauour sayd to saynt Thomas) *Qui (h) non viderunt & crediderunt*, which haue not seene and yet beleueed. Wherefore away with all Egyptian princes, that mayntayne all false prophetes to resist the messengers of God. Away with Achab and his complices, that gaue eare to none but such as speake (i) Placentia, that is, thinges to please and content theyr humour. Fye vpon all double and false hearted Saules, that repayre (k) to wyches, when they can receyue no resolution from God, all (l) Ochiziazis, that renounce the God of Israel to conferre with Belzebub, all purpled cormorants, that wyll be satisfiied saue by none such as aryse from the (m) dead, all Herodes, that wyll looke for saynt Iohn Baptyst to (n) reuiue, after once he hath beene layde vp in his sepulchre, and worke fresh myracles, and last of all, vpon all those, *Qui (o) quaerunt a mortuis veritatem*, which seeke for trueth at theyr handes that are layde vp to rest: for (p) I, ay veu, &c.
- Luk. 16. 31.  
1. Reg. 3. 1.  
Esa. 29. 11.  
Heb. 1. 2.  
Iohn 2. 29.  
Esa. 39. 10.  
1. Reg. 28.  
1. Re. 1. 1.  
Luk. 16. 17.  
Matt. 14. 2.  
Deut. 18. 11.  
In Iud. 11.

I haue noted dilligentlie (sayeth Ph De commines) that GOD reuealeth not his purposes by such meanes nor in these dayes, as he was wont, neyther is it requisite he should, when so many straunge examples fall out in the world, most woorthy to be beleueed. Belyde, he hath assured vs of his most holy spirite, not onely to assist, but to leade vs also, *In omnem veritatem*, into all trueth, and to remayne with vs, *Ad consummationem seculi*, to the consummation of the world. Now whereas some are not ashamed to defend, the dregges of theyr deepe ignoraunce by warrant of antiquitie, it shall not be amisse (by looking into certayne of the better sort) to conceyue how farre the rest wyll eyther lende theyr hearts or handes, to the cloaking of the cosenage. Fyrst to beginne with Xenophon, a man endewed by nature with most excellent and peerelesse giftes, if any such were in that crewe: *Diuinationem penitus sustulit*, He tooke all kindes of diuination quite away, esteeming it a wyser parte, to remooue a blocke of error and offence out of the way, least any man should chaunce to trippe, then to mayntayne a watchman, to giue warning to the passengers. Panæti<sup>us</sup>, no whytte inferiour to Xenophon (as wee maye gather by those honest groundes, which are alledged bothe by Cicero and diuerse other out of his

Iohn. 14.  
Matth. 28.

*of supposed prophecies.*

his workes) Dubitare se dixit, sayde he, stode in doubt, wanting (as it seemeth) no good wyll, to haue proceeded in playne termes, if he had not feared both the rable of diuiners of all sortes, whose number was exceeding great, and the mallice of the braynsicke multitude, which had beene ouer-long bewitched with theyr wickednesse, to resigne to reason.

From the ground of nature, it is certayne they could not deriue this gyfte, because all countries had it not alyke, from the first beginning of the world: but one tooke from another, by a kinde of imitation. Rome drew her principles from Heturria, Heturria from Greece, Greece from Egypt, and Egypt from Moloch, that is from Sathan: who is no worse provided of fitte iustrumentes to teach, then men are apte and ready to take out such lessons, as are powdered and spiced with commoditie. Cicero confesseth in one place, that hee could digest some kindes of diuining reasonable well, if they could once be cleared and acquitted of two thinges, namely, vanitie, and parciall regarde, which is all one: as if hee would lyue without ayre, slake his thyrst without moysture, or feede without sustenance. When Prusias refused to encounter with his enimie, because the bowelles of the beastes dyd promise bad successe: that woorthy Hanniball enquired, whether it were more conuenient to giue credite in this case, to the sonne of a young heifer, or the skyll of an olde generall. Flaminius (some thinke) was ouerthrowne for making slight account of all abodes, but that could no way be the cause: for that Q. Paulus spedde rather worse then better, at the feeld of Canne, notwithstanding hee were most precise and scrupulous in obseruing rytes of auguration, and this is holden by the writers to be certayne that if Cæsar in despyght of all his Prophets and Astrologers, had not made a steppe before winter into Affrike, his enimies (hauing ioygned and vnited all theyr forces in one body) would haue put the quarrell in great hasarde. Wherevpon it is recorded as a vertue in him with the rest, that hee gaue no credite or regard to Prophets.

We finde not one Philosopher of good account, that admitteth any other meane of vnderstanding thinges to come, then by the knowledge of the proper and next causes, by which they are brought to passe, excepting Porphirie, who was a worshipper of deuilles: and yet for all that, beeing deeply pierced in the forehead lyke Goliath with the poynt of trueth, he squareth often from himselfe, and knowes not howe to face out so grosse a paradoxe. It is most certayne, that one of the cheefe articles, that were objected against Socrates at Athens, was contempt of Oracles. Moreouer, Galen could not product the iudgement of one Greeke writer, in defence of Starre diuinitie, which notwithstanding is one of the surest shoote-anchors, wherevnto they seeke



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

to tye the vessels of their vanity. Eudoxus Gnidius, who brought both Astronomy and Astrology out of Egypt, imbrace the first as a lawfull arte, and reiected the latter as a toye to be derided, his words are these,

(a) Chaldaeis in prædictione & notatione cuiusque vitæ ex natali die, non esse credendum, That we must not belecue the Chaldeis or Astrologers (for by a figure all is one) in theyr prediçtiones & obseruations of the fortune of mens liues, by the day of their natiuity. Againe, Camby-

(b) sen (b) prenituit maleuolis Magorû vocibus tam facile fuisse persuasum, Cabyfes repêted that he had suffered himselfe to be so easily perswaded, by the spightfull or malicious speeches of those men, whom by contrarie (as I suppose) they called, Sapientes a non sapiendo, as Montes with the Gramarians are deriued a mouendo, quia non mouentur, because they are not mooued. Cassander wrote, that they which gaue themselues most earnestly to the study of these mysteries, were often toyled and encombred with a world of doubts: but very sildome satisfied with any ground of resolution. Scilax plyed them in his youth when witte was greene, and gaue them ouer in his age, when it was seasoned with the salt of experience. Anaxagoras was cõmitted to the common iayle at Athens, and preferued only at the sute of (c) Pericles with great adoo, for publishing a Treatise of Eclipses of the Moone, for since shee was admitted for a goddesse in the Temple, many stooode in doubt whether it might stand with piety, either to stint or measure out her course with a compasse. Octavius discouering that by prophecies, strange tales and buzzis were conueyed into the peoples heads, cõmanded 2000. of their volumes to be consumed in one (d) flame: retayning onely those of Sibilla, not so much for trueth perhaps, as for antiquitie. In the tyme of Claudius it fared worse with them, for a decree was published, De (e) Mathematicis Italia pellendis, of driuing Astrologers quite out of Italy. Vitellius dyd the lyke (f), during the tyme of his empire. But Tyberius exceeded all the rest in hampering this kinde of men, for finding how dangerous they haue beene euër to the state of a cõmon-wealth, would often craue their opiniõ on the top of a (g) steepe rocke bending to the sea: to this ende, that so soone as any friuolous or vaine word came out of their mouths, they might forthwith by breaking of their neckes, doo penaunce for their folly. Nero, dealt with them in tearmes of lyke seuerity, at the first beginning of his reigne, that is, so long as he was either good, or led by good aduise. & though his mother became to much addicted to those royes, it skilleth not, for as (h) S. Ierome writes: Nunquam a malis exempla sumuntur, etenim in seculi rebus semper a meliore parte incita menta virtutum sunt. Examples ought neuer to be drawne from the wicked sort, for in the dealings of the world, encouragement to vertue commeth from the better. After this againe, in the dayes of Alexāder they were put to this harde choise, either to forswear theyr arte, or to forsake theyr countrie. The Emperors, Dioclesian and Maximin

(a)  
Cicero de  
diuin. lib. 2.

(b)  
Euse. in ora.  
const. ad  
sancta. cap. 17

(c)  
Plutar. in  
Peric.

(d)  
Suet. in oct.  
cap. 31.

(e)  
Tacit. annal.  
lib. 2.

(f)  
Idem. hist.  
lib. 2.

(g)  
Tacit. in  
Tiberio.

(h)  
Hieron. ad  
Iul.

of supposed prophecies.

Maximin, helde it for a lawfull thing to practise the rules of Geometry: *L. artem C. de mal. et Matth.*  
*Ars autem Mathematica dānabilis est & omnino interdicta*, but the art of Astrology (say they for so we must translate it in this place) is damnable and forbydden altogether. If any man except against my translating this word, Mathematica into Astrology, I first presume to warrāt it by the very text of the lawe it selfe, wherein *Ars Mathematica*, is specially distinguished from Geometrie: whereas, according to the larger and more ample sence of Mathematica, Geometry is a braunch of the Mathematicalles. Againe, we finde that in the yerie next lawe, *Mathematici* are matched, *Cum Chaldaei aruspibus auguribus, &c.* which prooues them to be none of those whome the lawes doo tollerate.

Beside, not onely Aulus Gellius, who notwithstanding is a wytnesse strong enough, touching the proprietie of the phrase, but Cor. Tacitus, and Tertullian a Doctour of the Church, together with diuerse of the best learned Doctours of the ciuill lawes, affirme Astrologos and Mathematicos to cōcerne one thing: eyther by a figure, or *καταχρηστικῶς*, that is by abuse of the common phrase of speeche, or because the Prophetes went about to shaddow their vnlawfull studyes with a miste of honor. *Irrepunt enim vitia sub ymbra specieque virtutum*, for vices creepe in for the most parte (sayth S. Ierome) vnder the shadowe and pretence of vertues. These matters are so playne and euident, as I cannot sufficiently woonder at theyr shamelesse foreheads, which of late haue sought to satisfie this place with fancies of their owne, & lykewise with deuises of theyr freends, without so much as any signe of probabilitie: notwithstanding I desire to vnderstand, how they wyll shift away the censures of the Emperors, Constans & Iulian, who haue added to the former penall lawes a cōstitution of their owne, *Vt sileat omnibus perpetuo diuinādi curiositas*, that the curiosity of diuining be layde to sleepe & put to sci-  
 lence, not in some but in all, not this kinde or that, but Vniuersa diuinandi curiositas, not for a tyme, but for euer. It pitties me to thinke in theyr behalfe, how many stripes they should haue borne in those daies, for contending by the stroke of wil against the streame of order. It serueth not their turne, to gesse that Magicke is excluded in those places, rather then Astrology, as well for that which hath beene sayd before, as to preuent the iarre of repeating one thing sundry times without effect: lyke colewoorts twise sodden, for in that very tittle, prouision is made (by another lawe) against all such as disturbe the cōmon vse of the foure elements, by practise of arte Magicke assault the lyues of innocent and honest men, call vpon familiars & damned spirites for reuenge against theyr enimies, *Aut enarrandis somnijs occultant aliquam diuinandi artem*, or conceale a kinde of diuining arte vnder the colour of expōding dreams, & altogither are adiudged to the paines of death, *Tāquā naturae peregrini*, as aliens frō nature, enimies to mākind, & such as Iplam *prope modū Maiestatē pulsant*, do almost strike at the soueraine maiestie.

Ptolome

Ad Paul:

L. ethi. I.  
 multi. C.  
 cod.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

*Iambl. de  
mist Egypt.* Ptolome himselfe durst neuer warraunt his prognosticating aymes to be Exacte veras exactly true, and therefore in my iudgement it is worthy the noting, that among all the learned men which hane spronge out of the Vniuersity of Parris, since the time of Charles the great and of Alcuinus, whom I take to be the first that publickely professed arte therein: not passing two or three haue vndertaken to defend diuining by the starres, and those also rather to display theyr wit, as others haue commended baldnesse, banishment, folly, the gowte, &c. then for that they meant to giue any grace or credite to the matter. By this experiment we may conceiue, howe iust consideration mooued Iamblichus, (though he were a porphirest) to iudge, that albeit at the first some knowledge had beene taken from the starres: Confusam tamen humanis opinionibus exiguum veritatis lumen retinuisse, yet nowe the same was so confounded and obscured with opinions of men, as it remained in it selfe eyther no light at all, or a very small glimse of certain tye.

It hath beene shewed, howe great an enemy king Saule was to the prophets of his time, while he depended vppon the loue & care of God and againe, howe desperately he rushed into Sathans nets, after he was giuen vppe to the pryde of his owne humor. In like manner, by howe dilligent and ready meanes Iosias, Ezechias, and the godly Princes, sought to extirp and roote them out of theyr dominions. These examples may be suted with the like of christen Princes, of whom it was fortolde by Esay, that they should be foster-fathers, and that Queenes should be Nources of the Church &c. For Constantine had no sooner rid his handes of Licinius his false and most vnkinde competitor, but he began to clesse and purifie the state after the best manner, publishing and enacting this law forthwith *Ne quisquam superuacaneas aut curiosas questiones moliri auderet*, that no man shoulde presume to deale with questions that were superfluous or curious, alluding as it seemeth vnto those which in the Acts are sayd, *Curiosa sectari*. Wherevppon, the cresse of glozing prophets was so sore abated and taken downe, as the godly myght be bolde to demaunde, *Vbi nunc essent draconum sibilas*? what was now become of the hissing of those dragons, which had so long whetted theyr infectiue teeth, and spitte out theyr poyson against Christ and his kingdome: *Ab huiusmodi enim rebus &c.* For from such thinges we are enioyned by Gods lawes, to diuert both our sighte and our hearing. Valentinean caused Maximus the coniurer to be ridde out of the way for practizing his arte, and so much were vngodly Prophets hated & detested in those dayes, as Iulian (because it was not law full to professe those vanities in open shewe) was faine to make a steppe to Athens, and there to confesse in secrete places with his learned counsaile.

Eusebius

*of supposed propheties.*

Eleuzius the Bishoppe of Cizicum, was depriued of his bishoprike, Lib.2. cap. for baptising the priest of Hercules the god of Tyre, who had beene 33. conuicted of arte, magicke. Eusebius, Emiffenus, beeing otherwise (for any thing I fiude) a learned and a godlie Bishoppe, was serued with like processe, for professing the Iudicialles of Astrology. Moreover, it appeareth by that learned father Epiphanius, that Aquila the first interpreter and translator of the word of God out of Hebrew into Latine, was expelled out of the ministerie of the Church for none other cause, then (a) Quid geniturarum inspectionibus, & natiuitatum diuinationibus vacaret. He gaue himselfe to looking into tymes of byrth, and diuining by natiuities. Saint (b) Augustine refuseth to receiue an Astrologer into the bosome of the Church, without solemne penance doone before, and they that onely harbour and lodge them in theyr houses, that is (to speake with saint Paule) that doo eyther (c) Facere, vel consentire facientibus, committe the faulte or consent to those that doo committe the same, are stynted at the penance of fīue yeeres by the council of (d) Ancira. The Emperours (e) Valeus and Valentinian, made the nouices as guiltie as the Doctours of this arte, and they that seeke to knowe the properties of Starrs with this intent: Vt ex illis futurorum euentus rimentur, that by them they maye diuine of euentes to come, are holden by the (f) decrees to be culpable of grosse Idolatrie. Neyther ought it to seeme strange, that they should be noysome to the world (as Esay writes of others) g) Cum sunt molesti Deo, when GOD himselfe dooth finde them comberfome. Tertullian is of the minde. De Astrologis (h) ni loquendum quidem esse, That we should not so much as speake of Astrologers: his reasons are, first, because they giue a kinde of honour vnto Idolles, in suffering their names to be registred in heauen, as of Mars, Iupiter, Venus, Saturne, &c. Secondly, because they seeke to tye and tedder vs. to the course of Planettes, making small account of the prouidence of GOD, which is priuate to himselfe, and thyrdly, because theyr groundes and principles were inuerfed by the deuyl: to conclude, as well Astrologers (sayth he) as their wicked Augelles, are excluded out of heauen, Eadem pœna exitij & discipulis & magistris, and there is one penalty of destruction provided, bothe for the schollers and the maisters. Saint Clement inueighes bytterlie against those, which ascribed (i) Veneri libidinem, marti furorem, lunæ insaniam, &c. To Venus lust, to Mars rage, to the Moone lunacie, to Andromeda bannishment, to Oreon an influence of hunting, to Canopus, a desire to fishe, to Medusas starre, sudden death, &c. (k) Origene accountes Astrologie for one of the cheefest baytes of Sathan, which we renounce in our baptisme. Gregorie Nazianzen suppoeth, that we maye as easilie conceyue how many wyll be dronke, by sight of the glasse which conteynes the wine, or what a Prince entendes by gaping

(a) Epiphan. de pond. et mens.

(b) August. in Psal. 61.

(c) Rom. 1. 32.

(d) Conc. Anc. Can. 31.

(e) L. Culpa. C. de Mal. et Matth. 26.

(f) q. 11. c. sed et illud.

(g) Esay. 7. 3.

(h) Tertul. de Idolat.

(i) Clemens Recognit. lib. 9.

(k) Origin Num. cap 12



## *A defensatiue against the payson*

on his chaire of State: as what our fortunes shall be by looking on the Planettes. Saint Augustine is afrayde, least he should deale too lyberally in dispensing with the knowledge of the Starres, which we call Astronomy: least men beeing mooued and prouoked with the sweetnesse of the bayte, should enter deeper then the word of GOD wyll suffer.

(1)  
August. de  
doctrina  
christiana.

In another place, hauing brought a multytude of superstitious obseruations, wherof some were worne out of vse with tyme, others published and spread abroad, to the great offence of godlynesse and all godly men, at length concludeth: Nec ab hoc genere segregandos esse, qui olim (1) Geneth liaci propter natalium dierum, nunc autem Mathematici vocantur, which were in olde tyme called Genethliaci, for obseruing the byrth dayes, but now Mathematikes, &c. Wherby we are to note also, for prooue of that which was set downe before, that theyr Mathematici, were the same with our Astrologers, for though (saith he) they take a perfect estimate of the position of the heauens, at what time we fyrst came into the world, Tamen quod inde conantur actiones nostras, vel actionum euenta prædicere, nimis errant, Yet in that (sayth he) they take vppon them to foretell by this, eyther our actions themselues, or the sequell and euentes of them, they swerue exceedinglye. After this, he commendeth greatly the iudgement of Hippocrates, for ascribing the resemblaunce that is comonly betwene twynnes, rather to equality, or rather once agayne (to borrow the termes of the schooles) to identitie of substance, and conformity in bringing vp, then to the moment of our byrth, which he calleth madnesse.

Cypr. de  
singul. cleric.

Saint Ciprian, according in one tune with all the rest, disclaymeth vterly the fellowship of those which offended wyllingly, in hope that martyrdome should make a cleere dispatche of all the score, and after breaketh out into these bytter wordes: Huic Martirio spem tradant, quos Mathematici docuerunt habere de castino præscientiam, & has coronas expectent, qui super angelos & Christum per Astrologos didicerunt scire tempora, quæ pater posuit in sua potestate. Let them delyuer vp theyr hope to this martyrdome, whome the Mathematicians haue taught to haue foreknowledge of to morrowe, and let them looke for these garlandes or rewardes, whome Astrologers haue instructed in the knowledge of tymes, which the Father hath put in his owne power onely, aboue Christe and his Angelles, and againe, hee glaunceth at theyr ignorauce, Qui ob febriculam ad incantatorum remedia confugiunt, Which flie to the remedies of witches for the fitte of an ague, and least we should so farre deceyue our selues, by conceyuing that the Fathers onely gripe Astrologers, which were Idolaters with all: Saint Augustine distinguisheth our Mathematicos & Planetarios from all the rest, reproouing bothe kindes alyke, and with no great oddes in mea-

Idem de  
dup. Mart.

mea-

## *of supposed prophecies.*

measure. Beside Tertullian is of the minde, that whatsoever was set downe by Christe and his Apostles against coniurers, should haue been as well dyrected against Astrologers, if they had mette with any: (a) (a)  
*Nā cum magia punitur, cuius est species Astrologia, utique & species in* Tertul. de  
*genere damnatur, for when Magicke is condemned, wherof Astrologie* Idolat.  
*is holden for one kinde, the braunch by cōsequent is condemned in the* (b)  
*body, therefore it is verie fitlie noted by the same good Father, that we* Esay. 33. 18.  
*neuer heare of any of these kindes of Prophetes after the preaching of*  
*the Gospell, that was left unpunished. It is written, I wyll (b) destroy the*  
*wisedome of the wise, and the prudence of the prudent, I wyll reiect:*  
*where is the wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the disputer of the*  
*world? Hath not God made the wisedome of the (c) world foolish? Both* (c)  
*the Iewes aske signes, and the Greekes seeke wisedome, but we preach* 1. Cor. 1. 19.  
*Christ crucified, &c. To cōclude, (d) Nihil scis Mathematicæ, si nesciebas* 20. 21. (d)  
*te fore christianum. Non est regnum cœlorum sperare cuius radius aut* Tertul. de  
*digitus abutitur cœlo: Thou knowest nothing Astrologer, if thou did-* Idolat. La-  
*dest not foreknowe that thou shouldest become a christian, he cannot* trice,  
*hope for the kingdome of heauen that abuseth heauen, eyther with his*  
*finger or his compasse. Chrysostome desireth to conferre with those,*  
*which arrogate or challenge to themselves the gyft of foretelling things*  
*to come: (e) Omnes enim istiusmodi præstigias Dei gratia irrideo, For* (e)  
*by the grace of God (sayth he) I deride and scorne all such kindes of il-* In 2. Tim. 4.  
*lusions. He toucheth matters neerer to the quicke, vpon the first to the* Homil. 3.  
*Galathians, and vpo the first of Mathew, calling them (f) Superstitiosam* (f)  
*fati tyrannidem, the superstitious tyranny of the destinies. In another* Ibidem.  
*place, Ille inquit furatus est, &c. He sayth, the false Prophete stale, but it* (g)  
*is a lye, for they know nothing, & vpon the Acts he affirmeth in plaine* In Acta.  
*termes (g) Sathanicum esse tribuere aliquid natiuitatibus, That it is a* Hom. 4. 6.  
*deuillish thing to ascribe any iudgement to natiuities. I could repeate* (h)  
*Tertullian againe, where he recordeth this among other errors of the* Contr. mart.  
*Marcionites, (h) Ascendentem nescio quam fortunam vel infortunium* lib. 3.  
*nascentibus adferre, That an ascendent bringeth I knowe not what*  
*good happe or yll to chyl dren at theyr byrth, and saint Augustine*  
*lykewise, where he calles it (i) Magnum errorem magnam dementiam,*  
*ex notatione syderum velle nascentium mores & euenta prædicere, A*  
*great error and madnesse, to presume that the manners or euentres of* (i)  
*those that come into the world, maye be foretold by dilligent obser-* De doctri.  
*uing of the Starres, againe, where he accuseth Manes and his Disciples of* Christ. lib. 2.  
*dealing by this arte: but this shall suffice (tyll I be prouoked further)* cap. 22.  
*for a taste of that sweete concord and agreement which is found among*  
*the Fathers, not onely in discredite of all other ayming and diuining*  
*craftes, but euen of Starre diuinity it selfe, which is so greatly magni-*  
*fified and applauded by the credulous.*



## *A defensetive against the poyson*

*Duditius in vita Polii.* I wyll conclude only with the iudgement of that worthy man; of late and honourable memorie, Cardinall Poole, who beeing certified by one of his acquaintance, who professed knowledge of these secrete fauours of the Starres, that he should be rayfed and aduanced to great calling in the world: made aunswer, that whatsoeuer was portended by the figure of his byrth, or generation, according to the course of fleshe, was cancelled and altered, according to the grace of his second birth or regeneration by water and the holy Ghost, in the bloud of his redeemer. Wherevpon he gaue aduise vnto his freend, in no wise to depend vpon such slipper holds: as eyther are not anything at all, or obscured & eclipsed altogether by a second disposition, meaning, that as by Adam we were borne to dye, so by Christ we should both remaine and raigne for euer. Thus hauing put them quite beside the comfort and releefe they looked for, by the countenance of learned men: let vs proue what maye bee further vouched, for a colour of this false ortography.

*1. Sam. 28.* Melancthon sayes, that Moses, Esay, Ieremy, with all the rest, impugne not all kinds of diuining, *Defuturis contingentibus*: but rather the presumption and pride of man, in labburing to vnderstand those secretes which are reserued onely to himselfe, as of the latter daye, &c. But this aunswere wyll not byde the touch, for the things which were demaunded of the Sorceresse, were matters of no such extreeme importaunce, as the knowledge of the latter daye, and yet we see that God condemneth them, with the playnest and most peremptory censure that may be imagined.

*4. Reg. 1.* Againe, to aske whether Ochozias should bee cured of his bruse, was a matter of small weight, and yet it was conceyued as a woorthy cause of reprobation: but cheefely we are to note, that these words of the Prophete vttered in generallitie. *Annunciate quæ ventura sunt in futurum, & sciemus quia dii estis vos,* tell what shall come to passe in tyme to come, and we wyll know that ye are gods, and againe, *Vbi nunc sunt sapientes tui?* Anunciēt tibi & indicent quid cogitauerit Dominus exercituum super Ægyptum: Where are now thy wise men? Let them declare vnto thee, and iudge what the God of hostes hath intended against Egypt, &c. Assure vs in playne termes, that the gesses of the Prophetes are not in any sort to be regarded. They saye that Moses was instructed in the mysteries of Egypt, it may well be, so long as hee was brought vppe in the Court of Egypt, by the daughter of the King, and so wee finde that hee slew a man. Neyther ought it to seeme straunge, since Ioseph lykewise dwelt so long there, that he beganne to sweare, *Per salutem Pharaonis*. Daniel was brought vppe among the Chaldeis, Paule at the feete of Gamaliel, Dionysius Areopagita, in the study of the Starres, &c. But since none are so fitte to iudge of truth, vppon repentaunce of theyr follies paste, as they that haue beene once entrapped in the snares of guyle: so can this instaunce helpe them lyttle.

*of supposed prophecies.*

little, till they prooue, that after they were called by the grace of God to knowledge of hys truth, any one of these persisted in the courie or practise of these apish toys which are the baits of ignorance *days 1100*  
 They tell vs furthermore, that because Elcana ascendit statutis diebus vt adoraret, went vppe at sette times to worship, Naaman departed from the Prophet Elizeus Electo tempore at a chosen time, and Christ sayde his howre was not come as yet: therfore times are to be regarded and obserued in our dealings, &c. To the first I answer, that both the time and place was limitted, wherein and when the faithfull shoulde repayre to the seruice of their God: and therefore we must not referre this note to the fortune of the day, but to the prescript of the commaundement The second argumēt hath no kind of affinitie with the matter, in defēce wherof it is alleaged, for if Naaman chose the time of his departure frō the prophet, it was by discretiō not by Astrologie. Thucidides reports, that the Pelopinesians gaue vppe the siege of Platea Sub ortum arcturi. There was a certaine time also, about which the kinges of Israell and Iuda were wont to goe foorth to battaile, Vertente anno, at the turning or changing of the yeere, Salomon accounts it the part of a wyse man, Loqui verbum in tempore, to vtter his speeche in season. All things haue theyr time (sayth the preacher) and all things that are vnder the cope of heauen passe ouer in theyr season. There is a time to spring and a time to dye, a time to plant and a time to plucke vp, a time of familiarity, and a time of sequestration, a time of ripping and a time of sowing, a time of warre and a time of peace, a time of loue & a time of hate, a time of silence and a time of vtterance, a time of weeping and a time of smiling: to conclude, Cuncta fecit Deus bona in tempore suo, God made all thinges good in theyr time, and therefore were the sonnes of Issachar accounted learned, Quia nouerant singula tempora, ad præcipiendum quid facere deberet Israel, because they knew the fittest times, wherein to giue instructions to Israell what they ought to doo &c. Vppon the likelihoode of fayre weather we may dispose and prepare our selues, to take in hand a iourney or an enterprise, and husband men likewise make choise of times to sowe their seeede, and yet not one of all these regards the dismall dayes, which are obserued in our Almanackes, or frames assayres according to the fauour of the Planets. For who can thinke, that one and the selfe same constellation should not aswell incline our wittes to take the course which leadeth to good happe, as dispose the same, although we neuer gazed on the Planets.  
 It was well sayde by the Philosopher, setting prouidence aside (wherof Astrologers make small account) that election is rather an impediment, then a furtheraunce or helpe to those that shall bee fortunate by chance  
 ff. 3.

1. Reg. 13.

4. Reg. 5. 19

Ioh. 2. 4.

Thuci. li. 2.

2. Reg. 11. 1,

Pro. 25, 11.

Eccl. 3.

1. Par. 12. 32.



*of supposed prophecies.*

chance: and therefore by like reason I may iudge, that labour helpeth little, where the fauours are prescribed by necessity. Experience dooth teach beside, that they which eyther begin any peece of worke, or take a iourney, or attempt great thinges, vppon the slipper hopes that are afforded by the starres: haue euer spedde much worse then Tobi. as with the rest, who committing themselues onely to the care of God, consulted with no byrds of Egypt. Ninus who detested all Astrologers with theyr deceites, suppressed Zoroastes, who would deale in nothing without theyr encouragement. Pompeye with his garde of Prophets lost his head, and Cæsar by contempt of Oracles subdued his enemy. Iosias draue them out of Iuda, and preuailed in all thinges he tooke in hande. Saule seeking in despite of God, to know more then the priests or Prophets could descry, made shipwracke both of life and honour, Iustinian exiling all sortes of false Prophets with theyr bagge and baggage, did florish as a conqueror: whereas Iulian admitting them, with all theyr packes of falshode and blasphemous lyes, did perish as a cast away. *O quam pulchra hæc est temporum electio!* O how braue a choise is this of times & opportunities? let vs put a case, of beginning a long iourney by dyrection of the Planets. And first I would be glad to vnderstand by them, whither the gracious and fauourable beames of Iupiter (who ruleth in those matters, as they teach) affect the person or the iourney: if the first, then albeit we doo not presently take horse, yet is there such a certaine and secure foundation of prosperous successe already layde by the benefite of the constellation against an other time, as whensoever we dispose our selues to ryde, it is all one, as if wee had begonne before, according to that rule of theirs, obserued both in Comets and natiuities, and that the Planets broche not theyr effects forthwith, as soone as they beginne to signifie, but eftsfoones a good while after &c. If the constellation affect not the personne, but the iourney, or whatsoeuer other enterpryse he takes in hande, let them prooue by reason, by experience, or any sound authority, that the beames of Iupiter are able of them selues to bring fayre weather, cleer the seas from Pirates, and the wayes from theues, and to dispose all accidents in such a formall course, as may be luckye to the trauailour, which will be hard, considering howe many diuers thwartes of ill affected Planets happen by the way, to empeache and crosse the former graunt of Iupiter.

Beside, considering howe difficult a poynt it is to perswade a man of good conceit, that Iupiter must still preuaile, so long as my iourney is on foote, and that the former figure of the Planets leese no part of his influence, before my trauaile haue an ende, or that the starres must wayte vppon my stirrope: it standeth them in hand to prooue, that not the former but another Iupiter beginnes to smile, as soone as I prepare my

## *A defensative against the poyson*

my selfe to take my horse, or els giue credite to a certaine force imagined, which neither hath a fountaine whence to spring, a subiect wherein to consist, nor a ground wherevpon to settle.

Thus much by the way, I thought it requisite to note, that the playnest wittes may iudge, how farre all scriptures, reasons and authorities are from awarding any fauour to theyr parte, which choppe & chaunge the Planets like a Ship-mans hose, according to the figures of theyr owne imagination. To the places taken out of S. Iohn, (a) Non durn venit hora mea, my time & howre is not come as yet, and again, Nonne duodecim sunt horæ diei. (b) are there not twelue howers of the day &c: by which they would pretende a certaine interest in times: I aunswer, that for asmuch as it (c) behooued Christ to suffer and to rylē againe from the deade, not because the Planets mooned him to this Sed quia (d) voluit, but because, as the Prophete writes, he would: there is no doubt but the very minute, wherein all the miraeles and mereies should be wrought by Christe, were prefixed in the (e) prouidence of God before the worlde was made; and thus the places of S. Iohn by reason ought to be conceiued, otherwise when we reade, that Christ besought his father to saue him from that howre, that Zacharie was at his prayers at the (f) time of incense, that a feuer left the Noble-mans sonne of Capernaum, (g) Hora septima, that Ex (h) illa hora, from that howre, the Disciple tooke the blessed Virgin for his mother, and she the Disciple for her sonne, that Iesus cryed out at the ninth howre, (i) My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me? that Peter and Paule went vppe into the temple at the (k) ninth hower of prayer: wee must suppose, that Iupiter and Mars inspired and enforced these effectes which were not onely wicked, but beside ridiculous. They presse vs further with S. Pauls assertion, that God sent his sonne in (l) Plenitudine temporis &c. in the fulnesse of time, as though the starres had kept an audite of his comming: but this euidence hath cutte their throates, for that he meant none other time, then that whereof the Prophets spake, appeareth by the sharpe reproofe which followes within tenne lines after, against those which (beeing knowne of God) returned backe to the poore and simple elements, obseruing dayes, monthes, times and yeeres, in so much as he seemeth to be very much afraide, least in thys respect he haue laboured in vaine among them. Non ita dies obseruamus, et annos, et menses, et tempora, vt non audiamus ab apostolo timeo ne forte sine causa laborauerim in vobis, eos enim inculpat qui dicunt non proficiscar, quia luna sic fertur, vel proficiscar vt prospera cedant, quia ita se habet positio siderum, &c. we obserue not dayes, monthes or yeeres, in such sort as we giue not eare to the Apostle, saying, I am a frayd least I haue laboured among you in vayne, for he reprooueth those which sayd, I wyll not goe, because the Moone is carryed thus

(a)

Ioh. 2. 4.

(b)

Ioh. 11. 9.

(c)

Act. 17. 3.

(d)

Esay. 53. 7.

(e)

Ioh. 12. 27.

(f)

Luk. 1. 10.

(g)

Ioh. 3. 53.

(h)

Ioh. 19. 17.

(i)

Mark. 15. 33.

(k)

Act. 3. 1.

(l)

Gal. 4. 4.

Gal. 4. 9. 10.

Aug. Epist.

119.



## *A defensatine against the poyson*

August. E-  
pist. 119.

Chrysost. in  
Math.

Fulg. ad  
proban.

Tertul. de  
Idolat.

Math. 2. 12

Greg. ho. 10

thus, I wyll goe, that all thinges maye be prosperous and fall out happily, because there is such or such a position of Planettes, &c. Then eye vpon the difference of dayes, as dismall, fatall, fortunate, &c. emblasoned in the greatest part of Almanackes, and eyther gathered vpon particular conceytes, or populer obseruation, or curiosity in vnlawfull arts, which altogether are condemned by this censure of the Scriptures.

From hence they flie to the Starre, which conducted the wyse men to the place where Christe was with his mother, but this place dooth more impugne then fortifie theyr groundes: for since it was no common Starre, but deputed onely to that ende (as the Fathers thinke) wee maye rather iudge it to haue beene sent of purpose to disprooue theyr tales, which thought no matter of importaunce could fall out, without the same were signified beforehand by those Starres and Planettes, vpon whose discoueries they grounded theyr assurance: Credo hoc nomine Christum sibi obligauerunt. I thinke (sayth Tertullian) in scorne they bound Christe to them by this courtesie, &c. Although, sayth he, it be not found that euer any godly person (after the byrth of Christ) proled in natiuities. Some thought the Starre to haue beene prefigured, by that place of the scripture, Stella orietur, &c. But whether it were thus or not, it is as lawfull to defend all dreames by that example of the wyse men, which were warned not to retorne to Herode, as diuining by the Starres, vpo this one particular exāple of the star apearing. For Christes natiuity depēded not vpon the Starre (as it was surmised by the peeuish Priscillianistes) without any ground: but the Starre vpon his natiuity, in respect whereof it was fyrst created. But Christe (sayth Cardan) was borne, Prima facie virginis ascendente, The first face of the virgin ascending, whose proper image is a virgin nourishing a chylde: ergo, we may not deny, that the Starres and Planettes wrought in his natiuitye. What credite may be giuen to Images, hath beene debated and discussed more at large before, whether I referre the Reader for his better vnderstanding. But to theyr argument, I aunswer by theyr owne aucthority, that it is most false, Ascendisse primā faciem virginis, at the byrth of our Sauour: for then must it haue beene at ten of the clocke, whereas antiquity affirmeth it to haue beene at twelue, and so the Church obserued it by vigill many yeeres together.

As false it is that Mars was then in Domo mortis, to portend a bloudy death, vnlesse Virgo dyd ascend, which is holden for a fable. If they reply to this, that though Mars should remouue from thence in Domū septimam, he threatens violence no lesse, then if hee were in Domo mortis, where Astrologers doo marshall him: it maye be aunswered, and by the warrant of themselues, that for as much as Mars is in his altitude, this daunger quayleth, Quia genitura est nocturna, because the byrth falleth out by night, &c. Againe, Benignitas Iouis in horoscopo obstitit

*of supposed prophecies.*

●bisset violentia, the sweetenesse or benignity of Iupiter in the horoscope aswageth violence, especially the sayde Horoscope being in the house of Venus, happily conioyned with the great God Iupiter, which chaunced at the time of this natiuitie.

Moreouer it is certaine, that the Moone who beares the greatest stroke in Genitura nocturna, in the birth night, was then most prosperous in Domo. mortis: which imports an easie death without all force or violence. Wherefore it is more easie to be prooued by the principles of these good men, that Christ was neuer in that agony which saued them from hell (and truely for my part I thinke, vnlesse these toyes be left, his death will doo them little good) then that eyther he was borne or crucified, according to the course or influence of Planets. But Saturne (say they) was in the 9. house, and in the signe of Gemini, which giueth warning both of a priest & Prophet, I answer. and they can not denie, that he was retrograde at that instant, which by theyr rules abateth much of his diuinity. Beside a daughter of the house of Millane called Eleanor, was borne within these 80. yeeres vnder the same figure, and yet neyther prooued a Cassandra to giue warning of mishappes to come, nor an Aaron to beginne the sacrifice. The best of all is, that theyr great Bassa Abraham Iudæus is of the mynde, that whosoever findeth Saturne thus consoorted at his birth: *Malus procul dubio fiet Christianus*, shall be without all doubt a very bad Christian.

Haue not we great cause to magnifie that arte, which prooueth Christ the sonne of God (of whom the godly tooke the name of Christians, in the tender spring and first beginning of the Church at Antioch, and by whom we were all redeemed from the burning lake, whose torment hath neyther ende nor remedy) to be but a badde Christian. Because Capricorne was in the lower part of heauen, and Libra ascended at that instant, one will haue Christ a king, an other to be borne in a stable, and yet these figures fall out euery day without like euent or accidents I mislike not, that all reasons be accepted that may tende to the defence of trueth: yet since it neyther needeth helpe of dreames nor toies, wee leaue such reffuse ware to the bankrupt infidels. After this they picke out of the text, that the Sunne and Moone shall shewe signes and tokens of the latter day, so shall the rainebowe warraunt vs, from beeing drownd any more heereafter with a flood: but as it is false Logicke, to maintaine an argument affirmatiuely from the parte to the whole, so were it likewise a grosse error in diuinitie, to presse God as if were perforce to reueale his pleasure, touching all euent and accidents to come, because he giueth warning by expresse signes of some particulars.

It is not lawfull to peruert, to racke or wrest the word of God, but

G g. j.

looke

Act. 11. 26.

Mat. 24. 29.

Gen. 9. 13.



### *A defensatiue against the poyson*

Iosu. 2. 13.

Matth. 24.

Mark. 13.

Luk. 21.

looke what he hath recommended by the warrant of his voyce to marke: and otherwise to let all signes and tokens passe without offence, which are not lincked to their proper & determinate effect by the rule of the Prophets. Rahab by hanging a redde list out of her windowe, preserved both her selfe and her householde from the sworde: may we conclude vpon this president, that all the cittizens of Ierico should haue spedde aswel, if they had doon the like when the forces entred? Againe, because the coughing vppe of clotted bloud declares a plurisie, may wee gather that is a signe of phrensie? This Logicke were out of square, for whatsoeuer is referred, eyther vnto one particular effect or tyme, cannot be noted or obserued, as a rule for all things, nor for euer. Furthermore, a multitude of circumstances altogether opposite to the scope and drifte of theyr intent, maye be collected out of this authoritie. For first the signes whereof we are admonished by Christe, are no lesse euident to the simple, then to the Doctors of Astrology: for whosoever hath eyes maye see the chaunge of the Sunne and Moone, whereas Astrologers are woont to arrogate a knowledge to them selues, aboue the reach or compasse of the multytude. Secondly, these tokens warne vs not of any good or badde successe concerning lyfe: but of dissolution of fleshe, that the soules, may be saued. Thyrdlie, they are lyngered vntyll the comming and approching of the latter daye, euen as it were of purpose, least the wicked might extend them to the mayntenaunce of vanitie. Fourthlie, we maye note, that Christe to cutte off singularitie, hath matched them with other signes, no lesse importaunt then them selues: as the moouing of the heauens, the fall of Starres, the tyranny of Antechriste, diuision among Princes, freends and kinsmen, warres and brutes of warres, &c. Signum filij hominis, the signe of the sonne of man, &c. And therefore may we iudge concerning fortunes and natiuities, as well by these as any of the rest, that are expresse in the Scripture.

Matt. 24. 36.

Psalm. 19.

Last of all, albeit these thinges come before as messengers to summon, to arrest and call vs to the barre, yet least we might become too proude and dissolute, vpon the certaine knowledge of the time: Christ teacheth vs, that of the precise howre no body hath knowledge, no not the Angels, but the Father onely. They say, that *Cœli enarrant gloriam Dei*, which we confesse, but in such measure as we rather woonder at his wisedome, then grope for his mysteries. To reade the booke which Galen wrote, *De vsu partium*, or to see the cutting vp of man, would represent as braue a muster of Gods mightie workes to the conceyte of man as the view and consideration of the Starres. and yet I thinke it would be harde to finde a man, that would not rather dye, then rake in bowelles of dead menne with Iulian the renegate, for knowledge of thinges future. Vpon a certayne note, that Adam gaue names to the Starres,

*of supposed prophecies.*

Starres, they would conclude him to haue beene an Astrologer : but as easily they may defend him to haue beene a bowell searcher or a painter, because he gaue names vnto beasts, &c. It is enough, that he named them for excellencie, not for diuination, as our husbandmen obserue them, for the proper knowledge of the season of the yeere, but not for prophecie. Not content with this, another of that crew retayning in his minde that olde principle of Protogenes, that thinges which are remooued furthest out of memory, may be most boldly counterfeited, appealeth to the time of Seth, by whom (sayth he) a number of exact and perfit rulers (concerning iudgement by the Starres) were caused to be engrauen in pillars for enstruction to posterity. Beside he prooueth by the verditte of Iosephus, and certaine other of the Iewish Rabbies, that Abraham the Patriarch himselfe was not voyde of vnderstanding in these misteries, triumphing and insulting vpon those that scan the fables of this arte, without eyther meane or modesty.

But to let slippe the silence of the Scriptures in this poynt, which notwithstanding giueth a fowle check to forgerie : I wonder what should mooue them to byte this egerlie, at argumentes of so slender holde, as neyther could aduantage them nor hinder vs, though wee should admitte them to theyr vttermoost. For who denyes, that Seth or Abraham might be so farre expert and skylfull in the Starres, as tended to the knowledge of theyr courses, eclipses? &c. Considering the chyldren of Israel, as well in those dayes, for distinguishing the seasons of the yeere, as afterward, about the keeping and obseruing of theyr feastes and ceremonies, stood in great neede thereof, and therefore diuerse gather vpon that place of the Chronicles, *Viri eruditi qui nouerant singula tempora*, &c. That the trybe of Isachar was bound by order to the studye of the Starres, as diuerse Colledges in Cambridge at this daye (according to the Statute of the Founders) are enioyned to giue allowance vnto certayne to this ende, but if any kinde of diuination, eyther by the Planettes or by any other meane, had beene deemed lawfull by the Fathers of that golden age : it maye be thought that Moses would eyther haue recommended it, together with the Sacrament of Circumcision, and other rytes obserued long before the lawe, to the godly that came after, or at the least haue spared and forborne those bytter and reprochfull tauntes and menaces, which are denounced in the legall monumentes. Besides, considering howe lyttle may be culled out of Genesis to this effect, a man would woonder where Iosephus founde these royes : vnlesse it were in Cabala whereof I spake before, or that they crept into the Church by stealth and ouer-sight, with many fowle abuses more, a great while before the time of Iosephus, which not only we that onely cleaue to Christe and giue ouer Moses (further then he preacheth him) but the Iewes themselves, which are drowned in the



## *A defensatine against the payson*

letter as a waspe is in a syrripe, vterly forsake and abandone as Apoc-  
 eriphas and counterfeytes. And whereas some alledge out of Metho-  
 dius a writer of conuenient antiquitie, that one of Noes sonnes called  
 Ironicus, Futura per hanc artem prædixerit, Foretold thinges future by  
 this arte: I deny that any man of iudgement ought to marshall this  
 bastarde impe, among the sonnes of lyght considering the Scriptures,  
 which describe the petigrees at greatest length, doo not so much as  
 name or notifie the personne of the man, much lesse describe or paynt  
 out his qualities. Beside, I would not haue the Reader deceiued or a-  
 bused with an empirie name, for this is not that religious and learned  
 Methodius, of whome saint Ierome speaketh in his register: but a  
 blinde, obscure, and rustie writer in comparison, sometymes alledged  
 by Petrus Comestor, but with so lyttle grace or regarde of his owne  
 credite, as diuerse of his best and most approoued freendes doo wishe,  
 that he had beene more aduised and discrete in the choyse of his Au-  
 thors.

Thus haue I satisfied as many of theyr arguments and reasons, as ei-  
 ther I cold, find set downe in print, by those that haue beene busie with  
 these thinges, or imagine in myne owne conceite vppon the shoues  
 of probability. If eyther this be shaken (which is sayde, or new bul-  
 warkes reared in defence of diuination) I doubt not but the same God  
 which worketh in vs all, Et velle et perficere, and assisteth trueth: wyll  
 giue me grace also, as wel to batter the mudde wallles of Samaria, as he  
 hath donne hitherto to flanke the fortresse of Ierusalem.

The crafty  
 cogging of  
 these coun-  
 terfeit Pro-  
 phets.

Mat. 21. 19.

Iud 12.

1. Cor. 14. 8

Leu. 2. 13.

Mat. 25. 3.

**A** Nother reason why we should eschewe this gilded pill, and sugred  
 bayte of prophecies, may be alledged, for that the Prophets them-  
 selues cogge and lye, pretending what is probable by mans coniecture  
 but not conceiuing what is certaine in Gods prouidence. These are the  
 figge trees, which beare no fruite but leaues, they are the clowdes  
 that promise but let fall no rayne, the trompettes, whose sound is loude  
 and shrill, but prepareth no wise man to the battaile. Theyr sacrifices  
 are fresh, not seasoned with salt (as God commaunded) nor theyr coun-  
 sayles with discretion. Theyr lamps want oyle, theyr measures weight,  
 theyr suppositions trueth, and theyr dealings honesty.

Mel in ore verba lactis,

Fel in corde fraus in factis.

(a)  
 Gal. 6. 7.

(b)  
 Ose. 8. 7.

(c)  
 Iere 23. 18.

But of this let vs be sure, that (a) Quæ seminauerit homo metet,  
 looke what a man dooth sow, that shall he reape, that is as the Prophet  
 speaketh (b) Ex vento turbinem, of wind whurle winde, and to saye the  
 trueth, it were an ouersight to call the fained prophetes to any other au-  
 dit, or to looke for any other measure at theyr handes: which were  
 neuer priuie (c) to the secrete purposes of God, who neuer sealed the  
 skies

*of supposed prophecies.*

skies, to drawe (d) downe wisdom from above the cloudes, neuer walked in Nouissimis abiissi, nor ought in reason to be matched or compared wyth the holy one of Israell, Etiam cum (e) perfectæ fuerint scientiæ, no nor when theyr knowledge is most absolut. Quis (f) poterit cogitare quid velit Deus? who can conceiue what God will brynge to passe, so long as our immaginations are irresolut, and our coniectures fallible? Dare any mā presume to say with the king of Tyre, (g) Deus sum, et in corde maris sedi? I am God, and haue sitten in the heart of the Sea? or with Lucifer, I will aduance my (h) seate above the starres of God, in the mount of the testament will I sitte, I wil ascende about the height of the cloudes, and be like to the highest? The Serpent tolde poore (i) Adam that he shoulde neuer dye, and in that manner deale his prophets at this day, with simple and well meaning soules which march on with (k) Absalon: but it is Corde simplice, et causam penitus ignorantes, with a simple meaning and a single hearte, because they are not made acquainted with the drift of the conspiracie. The baits which allure vs to this trade, are pleasaunt I confesse, and so are both the (l) lippes of a strumpet, and the wine of court, Quod ingreditur blande, et in nouissimo mordet vt coluber, which hath a mild tast at the first, but afterward a tange and biteth like an Adder. Ignorans enim &c. but in the meane time the simple man is ignoraunt, that he is slyly called to the ginne, and that his lyfe was put in (m) hazarde, tyll the verie lyner bee pierced thorough with an arrowe. (n) Dalida was beautifull, but not fitte to be made acquainted with her husbandes riddle Hellen was a faire one, but whē the matter came to sifting in the Senat-house the wisest of the cōpany chose rather to dispatch her home, thē put their state in hazarde. The springs (o) of Bethel were exceeding sweete, but Dauid had rather die for thirst thē drinke his peoples blood, that is, with the perills of the liues of his subiects, Venena non datur nisi melle illita &c. Poysons are not giuē without a smacke of honey, and vice could neuer creepe into the minde of man without a maske of vertue. Cato knew the cousonage of these personæ, to be so notorious, as he would often seeme to meruaile, how one of them could looke vpon an other without smiling. An other noteth, that during the long warres betweene Cæsar and Pompey, they neuer almost gessed right in any thinge, and Galen wryteth, yet more plainely in this matter then the rest, that not one of all those Prophets and Astrologers, whose skill was most commended, and theyr depth admired in hys time at Rome, gaue any perfect iudgement, eyther touching the disease, the continuance or cure thereof: whereas himselfe (depending vpon lighte of lawfull arte) eyther swerued not at all, or was induced to his error with great probabilitie. (p) Quota enim quæque res euenit prædicta ab iis? aut si euenit, quid asserri potest? cur non casu eueniret? For howe fewe

(d) Bar. 3. 29.  
(e) Iob. 38. 16.  
(f) Sap. 7. 13.  
(g) Ezech. 28. 2.  
(h) Esay. 14. 13.  
(i) Gen. 3. 4.  
(k) 2. Re. 15. 12.

(l) Pro. 23. 33.

(m) Pro. 7. 23.  
(n) Iud. 14. 17.

(o) 2. Re. 23. 17.

(p) De diuin.  
of lib. 2.



## *A defensatime against the poyson*

(q)  
Iere. 17. 19.

(r)  
De Trinit.  
lib. 1. cap. 1.

Socrat. in  
histor.

Arist. Met.  
lib. 2.  
Matth. 4.

Dion. Taci.  
in Nierone.

Ambr. in  
Hexam.

of those thinges come to passe, sayth Cicero, which are foretolde by these? Or if they channce sometymes to hitte, what reason can bee brought to prooue, that they fall out otherwise then by meere happe hazard? (q) Non proderunt nobis nec eruent nos, quia vanasunt, therefore neyther shall they profite nor delyuer vs, because they are vaine and ydle. The daylie sayles and errours of Astrologers, which publishe Almanacks among our selues, may shew what trueth is in theyr words, what warraunt for presumption, and what assurance of their doctrine: wherefore, vnlesse we wyll be wylfull, in chosing rather (as saint Augustine writes) (r) Sententiam non corrigere peruersam quam mutare defensam, Not to correct a peruerse opinion, then to recant it after they haue once defended it, vnlesse wee wyll be farre more simple then that poore olde man in Socrates, who resolued neuer to be twise deceyued with one tricke, It is not possible that wee should open, or lende our eares to the pipe of the charmer, charme he neuer so wiselie, as the Prophet Dauid speaketh. Their manner is, to present a multitude of glaring colours to the sight of man: but such they are in verie deede, as appeere in the raine-bowe, or as the citties were with Sathan woulde haue corrupted to Christ, vppon condition that he would adore and honor him, that is not true but counterfeyte.

At such tyme as Brittanicus wayted for the great lotte of the Romane Empire, by the comfort and encouragement of a vaine Astrologer, hee left bothe lyfe and all, by the rigour of a bloudy tyraunt. Saint Ambrose telleth of one, that prognosticated great store of rain to fall after an exceeding drought: but none was seene, tyll by the prayers of the Church this fauour was obtained. Seneca, by a verie pretie fancie and imagination of his owne, bringeth in Mercurie, perswading with the goddess, that they would abridge the lyfe of Claudius, if not for any other cause, yet euen for verie pittie and compassion of the poore Astrologers, who had alreadie beene taken with so many lyes from yeere to yeere about this poynt: as if the destinies were not more fauourable, then theyr groundes were sure, the credite of Astrologie would decaye for euer. These watchers and obseruers of the Planettes, gaue out by theyr pamphlettes in the first beginning and tender spring of faith, that the name of Christ should not be had in honour, at the vtermost aboue two hundred yeeres, which falling out by tracte of tyme, to be a most egregious and famous lye: Albumazar (to keepe his favorites in lyfe) adourned this destruction of Religion higher by two hundred yeeres, supposing that this vndoubtedlie should be (as it were) the stynt and periode of our continuance: but GOD who promisseth, that heauen and earth shall perishe before any iote of his most holie worde, hath made them bothe a scorne to godlie men, and lyke-  
wise

### *of supposed prophecies.*

wife to theyr owne Disciples . Abraham the Iewe tooke vpon him, to assure his brethren of the comming of their phantasticall Messias, in the yeere of our Lord 1464. because it bare a constellation, not vnlyke to that wherein Moles is affirmed to haue bene borne: but note the plague of God, for in that verie yeere, wherein they looked for a Iubile and generall redemption from their greuous bondes, a restitution of the Temple and the Sacrifice, &c. Waxing proude and insolent vpon this brainficke hope, it fell out so, that diuerse Princes detecting theyr abuses, and vsufferable villanies and blasphemies against the name and death of Christe, by nayling Infautes to the Crosse for meere despyght, first spoyled them of all theyr wealth, which by increase of vsurie was growen to be exceeding great, after put the principall to death, and exyled all the rest out of theyr dominions.

Arnaldus Hispanus doubted, that about the yeere of our Lord. 1375. we should heare newes of Antechriste, and another, vpon a coniunction betweene Iupiter and Saturne in Scorpio, about eight yeeres agone, seemed to be verie ielous of the lyke: but thanks be giuen to GOD, we heare of none as yet, saue those of whome saint Iohn spake, when he gaue men warning to be carefull of their steppes, because euen then 1.Ioh. 2. 18. were many Antechristes, and saint Paule lykewise affirmeth the misterie of iniquitie to haue wrought in his tyme, vpon which place we are to note, that certayne calculatours were not then ashamed to giue out 2.Thef.2.7. that the day of the Lord was at hand, &c. Or if we wyll exemplifie these Antechristes in persons of this age, I finde not any more lyke to support their seates then our Astrologers, who set vp a newe plotte of heauen, and a new schoole of earth, and a new kinde of prouidence. I speake not of the dreames of Alliaccensis, about the counsell of Constance, nor of Albumazars endeour, to finde out a figure aunswerable to the lawes of Mahomet. The children in the streetes begin to deride and scorne these toyes, and therefore it is tyme for men of deepe witte and grauity to giue them ouer. Manfredus, a rare Doctour of Astrologie, assured Ordelaphius a prince in Italie, that, that verie yeere wherein he died, if there were any certayne knowledge by his arte, he shold not end his lyfe, Ante senectutem decrepitam, before extremitie of age made him lame and ynweldie: neyther is it to be maruiled, that hee kept no truer audite of another mans estate, when himselte hauing promised and giuen his worde to discouer woonders, the next Spring deceased in October. A notable example of the iustice of almighty GOD, and not vnlyke to that of Iulian, who hauing made a solemne vowe at his retourne to multiplie the tortures of good men, was slaine, it is not knowne by whome, further then that it pleased GOD to strike him from the seate of iudgement, in the verie next encounter with his enimies.

Constantia



## *A defensatiue against the possen*

Constantia an honourable Dame of Roome, hauing receyued assurance from Astrologers, of a long, a healthfull, and most happy lyfe: fell sicke within fve dayes after this of a burning Feuer, and finding that there was no waye but death (which is the waye of fleshe) shee streygnd her husbandes hande, and concluded bothe her speeche and lyfe with these complayning wordes. *Ecce quam vera sunt Astrologorum vaticinia*, Beholde what truth is in the vaine prognosticates of fonde Astrologers. My Lord of Arundell that nowe is, whome I name, as well for the depth of his conceyte and iudgement in young yeeres, as for the zeale, the reuerence and duety which I owe vnto himselfe, was woont at the beginning of the yeere, to note his Almanacke with rules repugnaunt, and dyrectlie contrary to those which were prescribed by the writer: and yet vpon account of minutes, houres, daies & quarters, at the ending of the yeere, forsomuch as concerned change of weather, my Lordes notes were found more often true (although they were set downe by chaunce) then his that stode vpon the warrant of a learned counsaile.

Aen. Sylu.  
in histor.  
Bohem.

Psal. 7. 16.

It was prognosticated to Crassus, Caesar, and Pompey, that they should all three sleepe in theyr beddes with peace, whereas experience dooth shewe, that all of them dyd perishe, *Morte violenta*, on the other side. Paulus florentinus liued, tyll 85. yeeres of age, and yet hee would assure his freendes in priuate, that hee neuer found one comfort, that might promise long lyfe in the figure of his byrth, but sudden death, with many tragicall and most lamentable accidentes. The great death of Cattayle, which was so certaynlie expected by the Calculatours, anno. 1558. turned to a woonderfull encrease of all kindes of sustenance. At the same tyme that the fonde Bohemians were afraide, to be consumed with suddayne fyre that should haue come downe from heauen, as some preachers gaue warning: they were almost drowned with a second floud, by meane of excessiue showers, spring tydes, and store of lande waters, that ranne downe with immoderate aboundance, as if God had resolved to deserue the falsehood of theyr iugling. The drifte is lyke a packe at Primero, where the smallest carde beeing cutte awrie, or comming betweene by chaunce: ouerthrowes the fortune of the fraudulent, & conueyes it to theyr aduersarie, according to the sentence of the Prophete, *Incidit in foueam*, &c. At another tyme the people were so scared with an vniuersall feare of waters, scattered abroad by Prophets of this kinde, as a certayne Abbot (seeking to preuent the worst) buylt himselfe a tabernacle vpon the toppe of Harrowe of the Hyll: but the conclusion is, that before Sumer were halfe spent, all the dytches were drawen drye, and the cattayle perished for lacke of water.

I could adioygne the pregaunt follies of some other freshe in memorie, which would haue put the world in feare of another floud, if the  
rayne-

rayne-bowe had not serued for a Sacrament of hope: sauinge that it is the part of no good nature, eyther to insulte on those, that are alreadye ouerthrowne with shame, or to agrauat affliction and milerye. The cause hath beene considered and reprooued by the ciuill magistrate, who cutteth of all causes of offence, and not without great cause: for whosoever sees the straunge disorder and disturbaunce of the simple sorte, vpon the spreading and dispersing of like fearefull rumours, which are faced out by learned men, or at the least by such, as by the peremptory manner of theyr writing and discoursing, couet to be counted and reputed so, must needs confesse with me, that it is high tyme rather to plucke, then impe the wings of presuming glorye. A wise man alwayes shunneth τὴν πλεονεξίαν the second nauigation, when he findeth how vnluckie prooffe, some other of his freendes haue made, by sayling in the narrowe seas of weighty matters, without eyther anye Carte of ordinary knowledge, or compasse of discretion: and therefore though I name not any man, yet I blame and greatly discommend him whatsoeuer he be, that caused the first author of this paradoxe, to sette the lees of errour, and conceits of ouerwening witte on broche, onely for the refreshing and reuining of his owne poore credite, almost ouergrowne with the noysome weedes of flatte contempt, the pricking nettles of disgrace, and the peirfing thornes of deserued condemnation. A man may beare with oversight, because (as Chremes sayth in Terence) Labi est humanum, but for one freende in a brauerie sometime to vouch an other, without eyther learning, trueth or lawe, sometye to beare the world in hand, that though themselues diuert theyr studies, (idque pro sua grauitate) to matters of more weight: yet others shall aryse out of theyr Ashes, to mayntaine a tale of Robin hooode against all the world, as if all knowledge were concealed in one parish, or rather in one simple cottage, importeth greater wantonnesse then may be well endured, vnder the maske of iudgement and authoritye. Wherefore leauing them, aswell to that which hath beene published already, in disprooffe of theyr vnreasonable aimes, as to the penaunce of the present shame, which were inough to make a wise man, to warre with all the Planets and supposed Gods of heauen: I will onely conclude wyth Salamon, that Stultitia colligata est in Corde pueri, et virga disciplinae fugabit illam, this is but wantonnesse (as M. Iuell said) correction will amend it. Thus God, euen our God is wont, Signa diuinorum in furorem vertere &c. to turne the signes and tokens of diuiners, into madnesse, neyther is it possible for them to speede better, which eyther take ayme by vnstable men, whose property it is to lye, or by presumption which hath no rest, or by the deuill who is the breeder and father of all lyes, or by tokens that are wont to waxe and wane like the Moone, or by the Planets which deriue theyr name from wanderinge

Hh.j.

and

Esay. 44. 25.



## *A defensative against the poison*

- and neuer persist almost the space of one minute (as themselves confesse) in one stedfast quality. But whether God restraineth such kindes of knowledge, because considering our want of temperance, they seeme more like to encounter and molest, then auaille or profite vs, or whether he repute the same a derogation to the maiesty and honour of his name or both (as I am throughly perswaded) it is certaine, that he hateth and detesteth all the kingdome of contingent prophecies. *Prophetant enim mendacia, et populus meus dilexit talia*, for they prophecy nothing else but lyes (sayth he) and with such empty wares my people is delighted. They wander in the mountaines, and skippe like rowe buckes from hill to hill. *Fugerunt conciti* they fledde in haste: but without the wheeles, which hang together by the spokes of trueth, and as the Prophet sayes, *In quibus erat spiritus domini*, in which the spirite of almighty God was present. That Cleombrotus, who bestowed the most parte of his time among the Fayries, in the streightest order diet and deuotion that any man could thinke, obteyned notwithstanding no more grace or fauour for his meede, the once in the yere one faire day to prophecy. Diodorus Siculus reportes, that inspiration with knowledge of thinges in future, was so greatly prised and esteemed, euen in Egypt, whence the greatest part of fables sprang: as they would nor afford the same to all theyr Gods but to certaine onely. Alphonsus de Castro writeth also in our dayes, vpon the plaine confessio of some persons put to death in Spaine, that the deuill sealeth not all those, which giue vp theyr names & forsake their faith: but a very few, & those onely that are sealed haue both the gift of working mischiefe, and of affoording prophecies.
- Esay. 5. 31. When Iulian the great Apostata was dead, his garrisons (which were most blinde and ignoraunt in such thinges as these) exclaimed openly *Apollinem falsa vati cinatum esse*, that Apollos prophecies were lyes: and yet we are so simple for the most part, as we take no warning by one stroke, how to preuent an other. The Germans at the length became so weary of theyr prophetesse Velleda, whose glozing maner was to bleare theyr eyes with toyes in stedde of Oracles, as they resolved altogether vpon this certaine ground: *Honestius Romanorum principes, quam Germanorum fecminas tolerari*. that the yoke of Romain Princes might be endured and abiden with more credite, then the women of the Germanes. For though the deuill sometimes vttered a trueth, in that manner which I signified before, yet he would be euer sure to sende a lye withall for his owne aduantage: as for example, to that intelligence which he gaue to Adam, of the ende of eating the forbidden fruite, namely that he should discern good and badde, he added that he should not dye. In like manner they that dwelt about the monuments, agnified Christe to be the sonne of the lyuing God: but with this abatement of a false alaye, that he came to molest and trouble them before his tyme, whereas in deede, he came in Plenitudine temporis,
- Eze. 1. 20.
- Plut. in Phil
- Theo. lib. 3. cap. 20.
- Tacit. hist. lib. 3.
- Mat. 8. 29.

*of supposed prophecies.*

poris, In the fulnesse of that time which his Father had appointed . It was no lye , that G.O.D. by mercie had so stronglie garded and Job.1.5. defended Job , as none could eyther hurt him or his goodes : but that the same Job would blaspheme, as soone as the finger of almighty God had touched him, was a lye for the whetstone, as the sequell prooued it. These warninges may suffice to keepe our soules out of the Lyons pawe and the fowlers nette, for as the Preacher wrytes, *Quasi qui apprehendit umbram et sequitur ventum, sic qui sequitur visa mendacia*, whoe soeuer giues himselfe to follow glozing visions, is like to him Eccl.34.2. that eyther follows winde, or takes hold of a shaddow. Wherevppon S. Paule supposeth those to be most happy, whom neither life nor angel nor principallities nor powers, nor thinges past, nor thinges present, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature is able to seperate , from the loue of God which is in Christe Iesus . The deuill hath attempted sundry meanes, to disturbe that golden peace which angels wished vnto men, to breede a debate, betweene the children of one wombe, that is the members of one church, and the subiects of one gouernment : but yet hath he not bestirred himselfe more gallantly in any one respect, the by raising vpp certain busie bodyes in the common wealth, who with limed papers, paynted bookes, & figures of wild beasts & birds, carry men fro present dueties into future hopes, & not much vnlike the foolish curre in Esope, which swam in the water, let fall the meat which was already in theyr mouthes, to snatch at shaddowes in the mooneshine.

How many treasons haue beene sette on broche? howe many wicked practises attempted, by encouragement of such fond toyes? I wold to God the smart at home, and manifold misfortunes rounde about, had not too fully warned nor enstructed vs. These are Volumina volatilia Zaca.5.1. the flying volumes, whose length are twenty cubites, and whose bredth are tenne cubites, and they carry the curse that goes ouer all the earth. &c. They are the Apples that made Adam taste of woe, and the dropping honicöbe, that brought poore Ionathas into his fathers indignation : but because I haue reserued a fitte place, wherein to publish diuers Gen.3.6. great & dangerous mishaps, which haue budded in all ages out of this vngodly roote, it shall not be amisse to discouer by the way by how many cunning sleights & stratagemes, our dizzie Prophets (which are neuer void of a painted pamphlet in theyr bosome) flourish and conceale their dry cöccits, to make men swallow them with more eager appetite. I.Re.14.27.

**F**irst therefore it behooueth vs to marke , that the first author and deuiser of these images, eyther in picture, sculpture, or such other meanes, were men of sharpe and pregnant witte, who hauing pried and looked with theyr Linxis eyes, into the moodes and humours of the Princes vnder whom they lyue; deliuer aymes according to that light

H h.2.

they



## *A defensative against the poyson*

they sette it with degrees, according to the compasse of the men, where ielouse or mistrustfull, they present a skaffolde, with one beast or other that belongeth to that house, ready to leese his head, as it fitteth theyr conceyte, and oftentimes when they can gather nothing by the Prince himselfe, they scanne the circumstances of the person, and his house, and by getting a farre off, imagine what successe is most lykeli to beryde him in his dealinges. Whereuppon, as it chaunced oftentymes that pamphlettes which prognosticated famine, haue bene causes of the same, not by the mallice of the Planettes which are toyes, but by the greedinesse of husbandmen, who beeing put in feare of such a storme, partlie by forestalment, and as often by the secreete hording vppe of graine, enhance the prices in respect of scarcitie: so diuerse noble Gentlemen, which neuer once conceyued euyl of theyr Prince within theyr hearts, for feare least the byrdes of heauen should descrie theyr secreete thoughtes, beeing put in deadly feare (of their owne decaye) by fooles, and affrighted by these images, disguised with a rustie flourish of antiquitie to deceyue the more, haue entred into great matters and and vndutifull attempres, to the ruine bothe of their liues and honours, though the ground of all, were rather care to prouide for theyr owne securitie, then any meaning to forsake the bonde of allegaunce, or to offend theyr Soueraigne. For as it is set downe by Plato, that the beginnings of all counsayles are in our wyll, but the perfformance in the destinies: so maye wee make the first choise of the pitche, which wee meane to flie, but after we beginne to mount and fore aboute the common sight. Nullum medium inter summa & praecipitia, there is no meane nor midle course, betweene the breaking of our neckes, and the sufficing of our humors, the seede is in election by grare, the successe in prouidence.

**A** Nother pretie knacke these cogging prophets haue, to marke what noble families are eyther tyed by consanguinitie, allied by matches, or vnited in good wyll together. If the league be sound and durable, or at the least (in reason) lyke to be the beasts, which are most commonly giuen by them for creastes in armorie, and best knowne to the world: shall be made to court and to imbrace, and lyke Hippocrates his twinnes, to weepe and laugh, to be sicke and whole at once, if otherwise, they fight and scratch, they wher their tuskes and beate their tayles, they take diuerse wayes, which alwayes giueth best aduantage to the counterfeyte, so that euen as the good man of the Inne at Chalcedon confessed to his gastes, that all the dishes of theyr banquet consisted of grosse porke, although the florishes of cookerie, and diuersities of sauce might happen to beguile their taste, we may conclude as well, that the ground of all theyr toyes, is crafte, disguised sundrie wayes, according to the skyll of those that haue the disbe in hande, and

of supposed prophecies.

though the sauce doe sometymes poyson that which was not sweete before : yet when the world is credulous, it may passe for restorative. If this be not to match (a) claye with Steele, (b) Ponere easas, & vinum miscere, to set downe the bayte, and brew the wine, to mingle (as (c) Pilate did) bloud with the Sacrifice, to dissolue the (d) wrath of G O D, into the liquor of the grape to deceyue in muske, to rinse the cup of all abomination, (e) Loqui placentia, to speake thinges to please, (f) Prophetare mendacia, quia populus dilexit talia, to prophesie lyes, because the people is delighted with such thinges, and to sowe pyllowes (g) and cushions, vnder the heads and elbows of all sorts and ages. Ad decipiendas animas : I am farre from the true sence and meaning of the Scriptures.

(a) Dan. 2. 47.  
(b) Dan. 14. 13.  
(c) Luke. 13. 1.  
(d) Apo. 14. 10.  
(e) Esai. 31. 10.  
(f) Iere. 5. 3.  
(g) Ezec. 13. 18.

**A** Gaine, whosoever noteth the right drift and scope of these glaring prophecies, with a single eye, shall finde their greatest ordinance to be beat against persons of the greatest state, not for that in trouth they finde more cause to shake them then the rest : but first, because the thunderboltes of fortune, loonest strike and blaste the Cedar trees, according to that sentence of Lactantius. Plus habent ad ruinam ponderis quae sunt altiora, And then a multitude of meaner persons, dependeth altogether vpon the fortune of the best, which beeing puffed vpp with hope, or beaten downe by feare, wyl alwayes be most prone and ready, eyther to aduancee or to preuent that happes, which standeth them in hand to looke vnto, eyther for aduantage or securitie. The deuill maketh more account of a Dolphins rayle, then a Mackerels head, of the soule of one King, then of a thousand pesantes: because according to the comon prouerbe, all the world applies it selfe to the Princes humour, & as we reade in Cicero, their faults are not so greuous in them selues, as, Quod vitia infundant in ciuitatem, Because they powre out vices into the bosome of the comon-wealth by their example, and therefore, Potentes parenter tormenta parietur, mighty persons shalbe mightily tormented. But to proceede, the noble men lyght oftent into the nettes of theyr imagination, because when simple persons passe awaye lyke a clowde of smoake, and leaue no more impression, eyther of the tyme, the place, or manner of theyr dwelling vpon earth, then an arrow of his passing in the ayre: the others are cast open to ten thousand accidentes, and were neuer yet so fortunate in this vncertayne lyfe, but eyther wisdom gaue them cause to feare, or inconstancie to stagger, and therefore it was sound aduise which an Astrologer gaue to Statius, in the time of Tiberius at Rome, not by his arte, but by his witte, not by the fygure of an Ephemerides, but by the warrant of a long experience, to prouide as well for a stable ground, wherevpon to rest with suertie, as for a ladder to clyme vppe with opinion, Immodica enim principum

Sapi 6. 7.



## A defensative against the poyson

(6) studia nunquam fore diuturna: because the fauours of great Princes  
(which exceede all bondes of moderation) were neuer durable: The  
(d) sun arriues no sooner to his height, but he declynies againe. The wa-  
ters ebbe when the flood is past: the angels which appeared vnto Iacob  
Gen. 28. 12. were cyther ascendentes or descendentes, there was no standing vpon a-  
ny certaine steppe. Autumne commeth in the necke of Haruest, and as  
(5) Electra sayd in Euripides, *μὴ βάλῃ πύργον γλῶκιν* the chaunge of all things  
is sweete and pleasant. The moodes and humors of both parties may  
(6) chaunge, for cyther the subject may were weary of contenting in that  
kinde, or measure, whereupon his credite grew, or the Prince of that  
(1) humore which was the cause of lyking. Beside Hugo de S. vict. is of the  
minde, that there must needs be lesse error and offence in deeming  
(3) that the fauorites of courte, shall slyde whose Goddesse cyther whirleth  
in a wheele, or standeth on a rowling stone, then in prescribing of assu-  
raunce in these brittle toyes whose ende is vanitie.

**M**oreouer it hath bene an ancient practise, of discoursing Sico-  
phants, sometyme by figures, sometyme by petigrees, some-  
tyme by popular reportes and rumors, to brynge that personne whom  
they most deteste and feare into so deepe mistrust and ielousie, of  
those that beare rule, as none, but hee must be regarded, watched and  
observed by the spies of state, while they bring thinges to passe accord-  
ing to the compasse of theyr owne entente, and couerte drifts of trea-  
son, with a maske of hypocrisie. Thus did that wilie foxe Seianus, by the  
practise and assistance of Astrologers, conueie a certaine deadly feare  
into the head of Tiberius, that Germanicus aspired to the state by right  
or wrong, whereas in the meane time he wrought onely for himselfe,  
Existimans se cum inueniem sustulisset facile in manu senem habiturum  
supposing that it would be easie, to gette the olde man within hys  
pawes, if in the meane tyme he could deuise by cunning plottes  
to ridde his handes of the younger. Ladislaus the king of Boheme-  
lande and Hungarie was dayly made afraide, with the greatnesse of the  
Count of Cilicia, by pasquilles, pictures, and a worlde of slye deuises,  
while an other sought to transport the gouernment both from the  
king and his posteritye.

In like manner Rycharde duke of Glocester, finding that so longe  
as his brother George of Clarence, stode betwene him & the gyle, he  
coulde not gette the prise, which hee had deuoured in his greedye  
thoughtes, caused a certaine prophecie to be suggested to the kyng his  
elder brother, that G. shoulde one day were the crowne, not doubtinge  
but the king would rather looke to Glocester, then George, as well  
in respect of the sayd Dukes former trespasse, and alliance, with the  
house of Warwicke (whyche he feared most) as because the manner of  
these

Dion. in  
Tibe.

Aeneas Sil.  
in hist. Bo-  
hem.

these prophecies, hath bene rather to regard the proper name, then the dignity. I speake not this to quicken or renew the memory of King Rychards heinous fault, which in respecte of all the bountifull and princely benefites bestowed vppon the family from whence I come, I could rather wish to be drowned in the blacke deepes, and folded vppe in the darke clowdes of obliuion for ever. But to prevent the poyson of theyr drift, which with like intent and opportunity, may broche the like attempt hereafter, seeking to enduce theyr Princes eye, with the shine of a silly Gasse-worme; (which seemes and is not) to make slight account of a wily serpent, lurking vnder Laurell leaues: which is indeede and seemes not. I could alledge one notable example of a Coniurer, if that be true, which is reported in the memories of Fraunce who representing to a Lady of greate calling, all those performes, as it were in a dumbe shoue; which should possesse the crowne in this our age, caused the king of Nauarre, or rather a wicked spirit in his steele to appeare in the fifth place, to none other ende (as I beleue then that she might attempt, the rydding him out of the way, by greater store of indirect deuises, whom the destinies referred to so great an honor. By these Plottes many worthy persons haue bene made away, and more may be, if God who onely guideth Prynces hearts, encline them not to some pictures, for theyr vanity, and to rewarde men for theyr vertue.

**F**urthermore, they draw the shadows for the most parte, according to the moodes of those that are in cheefe authoritye: If the Prince be martiall, they sette hym out with feathers, and mosse freshe and gallaunt collours for the nonce: but withall, so false and chaungable in some poynt or other, as whatsoeuer happen afterwarde, may seeme to those that scanne the misterie, to haue bene prefigured. Sometimes hee killeth three kinges before he warre with one, he beares a bloody swoorde in fiede, that neuer drewe his owne out of the scabbarde, and giues a wounde before he finde an ennemye. An other whyle hee sitteth in a chayre of state, to receyue homage, with lyke complements of honour. If the Princes wexe effeminate, and abandon all theyr study to delights, steightwayes the campe remooues, from Saguntum to Capua, greate fauours are pretended by the grace of Venus. The Ryuers flowe with Mylke and Honye, sportes abounde, myf-fortunes sleepe, and at euery corner of the booke, there blowes a Zephirus. To conclude, the prophecies are freighted with so great variety, of luring and entising baytes, as neyther they that wish, want wherewithall to feede theyr hope: nor others that enioye to content theyr humor.

Beside,



## *A defensative against the person*

Beside they promise honor, and aduancement vnto all, that haue sacrificed to the ryng sonne, and yet this charter sayeth oftentimes for many Princes haue made lesse account, of those in shining dayes, which rather vpon eagernesse of honour, then good will to theselues, haue bene most dilligent to please them. But looke by howe much princes are more willing to deale wel, with those that haue aduentured both life and labour, in a troubled streame, the more easily theyr fortune may be figured in colours, that shall be rayed or aduanced, by the meane of alteration. I doubt but there were inow, that at the firste beginning of Queene Maries raigne, could haue freighted bookes with prophecies, of Bishops comming out of duraunce, of Noble men restored to theyr bloode, of diuers put to death for execrable treason: with a number of such accidents, as were most suteable with time, and correspondent to the Princes humor, when eyther the tytle & remainder of the crowne is certaine, or the persons that succede in honor differ from the rest, that went before, in party, humor, or religion. I wyll not say as Tully dooth, of soothsayers, that he were vnfortunate, that could not hitte vpon a truth sometime, concerning fauours that shoulde be bestowed, but I would begge him for a naturall, that could not euer aime with probability. The knowledge & experience, which the wiser sort hath had of counsailes, forces, persons, times, and practises, may minister more certaine gesses, in this case then all the starres or Planets in the firmament. For euen as among gamsters at primero, some conueye wyth cunning vnderboorde, some marke Cardes, and some the dealing of the Cardes, some sette theyr rest vpon the packe, but none can tell, who shall obteine the rest, when all the packs, are shuffled and scattered by fortune heere and there, so likewise at the game of struing for a crowne, howsoeuer men may flatter or abuse themselves with wanton hopes, yet they that dare oppose theyr forces against right for furthering or helping forward of theyr owne commodity, are like to goe, not one iote lesse then theyr heades, before the title be determined. The famous, or rather most infamous treasons of lacke Cade, of Kette, and diuers others, which haue answered the fine of theyr vndutifull attempts, may show what benefite, is to be reaped by conspiracie.

I Will put an other case, wherein the painted prophecies may fall out to be true, as namely, when a man describeth the mis-fortunes of some persons, in a rable with his pensill, wherewith himselfe was made acquainted long before, by fauour of the magistrate. For who can denie but Ionathas vnderstanding by his father, in howe brutish manner, David shoulde haue bene stabbed in his Cabinette: might haue sette soorth all the matter in a figure to his friende, pretending to haue had aduertisement, by no kinde of other meane, then tradition from his elders

dent. Againe, the persons which were priue to the murder of King Edward the second, Richard the second, Edward the first, with his brother the Duke of Yorke, Galeazzo the Duke of Millaine, Ladislaus the King of Bohemlande, of the Duke of Guizo, the Earles of Murray, Lennox, and a number more, to the banquettes of Saint Bartholomew, the late attempt against Antwerpe, the rising in the North, &c. might haue set forth all these tragedies in manner of prophetic, before they came to be put in execution. Men maye guess, but God dooth onely knowe, we maye discourse and reason, but he will resolve, we maye furnish, and prepare bothe horse and chariottes, but when it cometh to the dead lyft, it is he alone, that will bestowe the victorie. Wherefore Cor. Tacitus, had great reason in my conceyte, to smile at theyr aspiring hopes, and wicked practises, who spending the labour, of theyr whole lyfe, in seeking to dwell, next to the rising sunne, and to be great with persons, that are in wante to credite thinges, they neyther can tell howe, nor when, are eyther wasted, with vnm easurable toyle, or before they can attaine to that they leske, or endangered by ielousie, or at the length deceyued by the prouidence of G O D, who sometime calleth men to crownes, that are bothe furthest, from the wish of freends, and from the feare of enimies.

But to proceede, with our disguising Prophetes: I obserue beside that they are, as Aqd was Ambidextri, and can vse the lefte hande with no lesse facilitie, then the right: they can bothe freese and coole, lyke to Satyres with one breath, they holde lande, bothe of Ierusalem and Ierico, they carrie in theyr bosomes, treatises of diuerse kindes, and vouch them as theyr auditours, are eyther yll or well affected to the matter, not vnylyke to some diuines of mine acquaintance, who meaning to keepe credite in bothe times, are neuer without one booke of notes, for the defence of Rome, another for the maintenaunce of Protestantes, but as theyr lucke was, to be lyked of by neither side: so fareth it with all the Prophetes that are rooted in lyke moodes of dissimulation, and care not what become of truthe, so menties humours may be satisfied. During the ciuill warres, betweene Caesar and Pompey, neither partie wanted Prophetes, which bothe gaue them courage to proceede, and hope to preuaile. When the ciuill warre was whorrest betweene Yorke and Lancaster, the bookes of heastes and babies were exceeding ryfe, and currant in euerie quarter and corner of the Realme, eyther side applying and interpreting, as they were affected to the tytle: whofoeuer were a lesfer by this matche, I am sure the deuyl, whose guise it hath beene to rayse bubbles, in a silent streame deuoured by this meane, a world of harmelesse innocentes.

I could alledge examples of some Kinges, who waxing ielous of the greatnesse of their subiectes, & taking sound aduantage by that humor,



## *A defensative against the payson*

haue caused them to be egged forward by such royes as these, to such trayterous attempts, as might endaunger bothe theyr liues, and theyr houses, by discouerie whereof, themselves haue reaped no lesse benefite then satisfaction. If the partie had eyther so much witte or grace, as to deserue the drifte, before it tooke effect, or came to lyght by other meanes, for his owne securitie, yet the broker had his pardon in his sleeue, if not the lyfe of him, that played the cheefest parte vpon the stage was engaged. This one respect, although there were no more, might suffice to make men beware of groping for an Ele in a vessell full of snakes. For as S. Ierome warneth vs, Inter serpentes & scorpiones, nemo securus ingreditur, Among serpentes and scorpions no man can prescribe of walking with securitie.

Moreover, this point is to be obserued, for the better finding of the guile, that albeie Pyntes daylie create Barles and Barrons, eyther for their pleasure, which in this case is a lawe, or vpon iust desert, which hath an honest ground, and though the Haraltes be farre more lyberall in these daits, about giuing armes (which is a braunch of Soueraigne prerogatiue) then either standeth with the reputation of inueterate Nobilitie, or with the credite of that office: yet shall you neuer finde the crestes and badges of these vpstartes, emblaſoned in paynted bookes, not because those persons neuer doo good seruice, nor deale not oftentimes in matters of more weight and moment, then the formost in that honourable rancke, but because those things are meerlie future, and in verie deede, beyond the compasse of theyr knowledge. This causeth them to ring out the bell of honorable antiquitie, with the deepest sounde, because it sildome wantes, a clapper of good courage, to perſourme as much as they prefigured. They runne vpon that string which maketh sweetest musicke in the vulgare eares, they sette theyr make vpon the beastes and byrdes of greatest honour and renowne, as Lyons, Horses, Dragons, Antelopes, Unicornes, Eagles, Faulcons, &c. To conclude, they iudge and not without iust cause, that a greyhounds whelp will sooner pinche then a mastie. It is a world, to note that among so many friuolous coniectures, as haue beene, Partim false, partim casu vera, Partie false, and partie true, though not so much by reason as by chaunce, wee should not be perswaded to beware of emptinesse, which offends the stomacke, and of winde which annoyes the senses. But Sathan and his ministers, are neuer vnde of subtyll and shifte, vnder whose vayles they maye bothe couer and conuey theyr mischeefe. If matters fall not out according to theyr warrant, they will straye endeuour to perswade vs with a multitude of argumentes (which as I haue sayd before) are all of porke, that either our owne pollicie preuented the mishappe, or the prayers of good men, as Ezechias and Ionas, turned the weapons edge, bothe from themselves and the cittie,

city, when the stroke was almost in theyr neckes: or that themselves, by labouring and digging at a fixed starre, as if it were a galley man, or a labourer at the mettalles, haue found a vaine or mine of grace, or that our enemies had somewhat in theyr constellation, or to withstande our opportunitie to doo them hurt, or if all this will not serue the turne, then comes an other dusty volume, out of an olde bench hole, which was foisted in, of purpose to prognosticate more golden dayes, and happy fauours, then disgraces were portended by the former. The beastes, which but a while before were driven out of the fildes, returne with pride distressing those, that gaue the first cheeke of offence and in a trice dishonourable losse, is changed and transfourmed, to renowned victory. Thus find they still one contradictory to oppose against another, a Rowland for an Oliuer, and a way to scape from a seruante, which shifts, would helpe them very little: if men by nature were not prone, & readye to make vp the gaps, & breaches of their arte, with the rubbish of vnfounde interpretation, reporting (as Chrysostome sayth) In 1. Tim. 2  
8. hom.  
wherein they spedde by chaunce, and omitting wherein they glorie and erre of ordinary.

**S**ome may perhappes mislike, that I speake of these booke, as if they were meere moderne. Surely, for the most part so they are, as may be gathered eyther by the colours, or the garments, nor the flubboring of sette purpose, to bestowe some greater grace and colour of antiquity. But, as Themistocles was discovered to be no right Athenian, euen by a simple woman of the city, for too curious affecting the proper accent, and phrase of Athenes: so can not the graye bearde of honour, which these paynted princes take, keepe theyr sic cheekes from blushing and discovering themselves, to be false and counterfeite. If any be more auncient, as I confesse that some there are, yet are they like a nose of waxe, that is to be wrested as we list, to the countenauncing of of most ridiculous, and vaine imaginations.

Aristotle telleth in his Rhetorickes, that the manner of bad Painters is, to write the name, of that which they sette foorth, because the people may not erre in deeming of a subiect, without eyther shape, or almost shaddowe, of the thinges which it ought to resemble, by the lines of imitation. But our Painters dealing worse with vs, so as they may both match and ouer match those olde ones, in ignorance of representing, liuely shewes of future times, so leaue they not one mark, or title to expresse: eyther what the persons are, or when the times shal fall, but make profite of our easinesse to be misledde, and piously instead of shining Lampes, which should giue light to doubtful steps, they sende vs leaden rules of Lesbos, to be writhed by abuse or mallice to the fitting of all fancies. Thus with a side winde, they sayle sundrye  
I i. 2.      wayes,



## *A defensative against the poyson*

wayes, and like skilfull bargemen, bende theyr forces one way, when they looke an other, but Dominus de caelis iridebit eos.

**W**E may not omitte, an other weatherbeaten shift of theirs, to sette downe many beasts of one kind or colour in their booke, in stedde of many branches, of an honourable house: onely to this ende, that if all spode well, theyr booke may winne more credite in the worlde, if but one alone (as more are like,) where all are noble by descent, and worthy for the qualities of bringing vppe, according to theyr byrth, the rest shall bee reputed as assistauntes to the cheefe, though they can not be partakers of the fortune: If some prouue well, and some otherwise, the good prooffe of the fortunate, shall aunswer for the blemish of the miserable, and the Prophet will alledge, in his owne excuse, that not ignorance, but reuerence to the body of that house, made him shuffele good and bad together, and as they terme it, to couer woundes of shame, with a vaile of silence. The shaddowes are so darke and fullen, that as Tully writes, *Interpres eger interprete*, one interpreter hath neede of an other to explaine his meaning, and yet, they that sette foorth a world of anticks, and at happe hazarde, can not chuse but light vppon the trueth in one poynt or other, *Multa enim ausis fortuna aliqua in parte ad erit* for, as Piso sayd in Tacitus, fortune assisteth those, in some one gallant enterprise or other, that are venturous in many: as if a man fishing for herringes during all his life, shoulde once light vppon a Conger. We might allowe these gloses, if they serued onely to whette our spirites, or to sette an edge vppon our wittes. But since it is more easie, to picke a plotte of pollicie, out of Ariosto, or *Amadis de Gaule*, then light out of theyr learning, we must confesse our sharpnesse, to be much abated, rather then amended, that we are deceiued, not enstructed by theyr dreames, and that which shewes the deuils cunning most of all, is that he seldome deales with matters of lesse weight, then life, to this ende onely, that with one sharpe snatch he may deuoure both soule and body.

**T**Hese pamphlets eyther take theyr pleasure, of the Prince that is, or that shall be, making both to lyue or dye, to prosper or decaye, as best contenteth those with whom they deale, so greate is their boldnesse, and so strong theyr illusion. Besides it is worthy noting, that the prophesies are not sette downe in text, like those of holy writte, but in paynting, a fitte couer for such a cuppe, for though the Noble men themselves, which giue the beastes in badge, aspire not to that height of fortune, which is promised in guilt and limmed leaues, yet will it iustifie theyr doctrine, gayly well, if any other that is hardy with the Lyon, couragious with the Courser, cruell with the Tyger, crafty with the

Foixe,

De diuin.  
lib. 2.

For patient with the Tortoise, or flye with the Serpent: bright and voyde of any vapoure with the starre, gracious to all men with the Sun, or restorative against the poyson of ill manners with the Vnicorne, achieve the dignity which seemed at the first to be lincked vnto certaine houses & discentes, so that not personnes but qualities eyther good or badde, may iustifie the booke, when the crest giues it ouer: or though the worst should chaunce, on darts or stubber with a pensill, may deface, or amende what is not suteable, for Paynters and Poets, haue a warraunt dormaunt, to choppe and chaunge, to glose and faine, to flourish and aduenture vppon any thing.

**C** Hisostome noteth further, that you shal seldome see the limit any certaine time neere hand, when things shall come to passe, for feare of beeing ouertaken in a lye, but they wyll euer bee, Nuntiide terra longinqua, messengers from a forraine lande, I knowe not for what cause, vnlesse as Dion notes, *Maiores plerunque creduntur de absentibus* greatest matters are beleueed of men that are absent, and as our Saviour himselve obserued in the gospell, *Propheta in sua patria, honorem non habet*, A Prophet hath no credite in his owne country, or els because they can not be contrawled in their ayme, or in imitation of the cruel steward, who made hauocke whe the time was not resolued, whe his M. would retourne, or because it is most true, that no man taketh harme, by adiournement of dayes, in a poynt of vncertainty. For thus a man to saue his life from the gallows, vnderooke to teache an Asse to speake withip siue yeere, hoping that eyther the simple Asse woulde dye with stripes, for euer ill conning of his lesson in so long a time, in which case, no fault could be imputed to the teacher, or if himselve should dye, the bonde were answered. *Quoties enim per me non sterit quo ninus impleatur*. *Conditio habitur pro impleta*, for so often as the fault is not in me (say the Doctors in the ciuill lawe) the condition is holden, as if it weare accomplished.

It is an other sleight of theirs to father lies vppon antiquity, *Et vermos est vulgi, falsis authorem subdere*, and as the manner of the common people is, (sayth Tacitus) to suppose, or faine an authour of a false reporte, with referring vs to such a library, such a religious house such a monument &c. wherein the booke is sayd to haue bene reserved, as a iewell of great price and valewe, many yeeres together, hauing at the first bene limmed, and sette foorth by men of deepe learninge, and exceeding holinesse. Thus were the bookes of Sibilla stored vppe in the Capitole of Rome: the discoueries of Abdelmon, in the temple of the Moores, Jupiters Oracles were preserued in a vault at Memphis, But since the very monasteries themselues, wherein these lightes were



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

kept, like Vestaes lamps, were swept away with a suddaine storme, without forwarning by the same what should betide, and Merlines prophecies were cheyned to the desks of many Libraries in Englande wyth great reuerence and estimation. What folly were it to esteeme the drugges which comming out of dusty shoppes, were neuer able to doo good to the first aucthor and deuiser of the recete: or to commit our selues, eyther to the warning, or protection of those friuolous conceyts, which haue brought diuerse to theyr ende, but none to recouerie. Miltiades a learned Bishoppe, was woont to presse and vrge the Paynimes with this argument, against their sayned Oracles, that if they were not able to foretell the tyme of their owne decaye, much lesse to redeeme another from the lyke, according to the reason a minore, which our Sauour maketh in the Gospell against the Scribes and Phariseis: if the lyght which is in you (sayth he) be darknesse, Ipse tenebrae quantae erunt, How great shall the darknesse it selfe be.

Math. 6. 23.

**T**He merchauntes that are woont to vent these rotten wares, vfe yet a sleight of skyl, more artificiall then any one of all these, in making deintie choysse of their customers with whome they deale, for either they delyuer out their prophecies in grosse Populo credenti mendacijs, To a people which beleeueth lyes, or they seeke to entice (as saint Peter sayes) Animas instabiles, vnstable soules, such as boyes & gyrles, whose tender shelles, for want of seasoning, with conuenient experience, are more apt to receyue any light impression of error, or to simple menne that are credulous, or to aged persons that are superstitious, or to Malcontentes that nibble at the smallest flie that appeareth. In aquarum diuisionibus, or to women which are no lesse readie to be deceyued, then to seduce and deceyue others. They enter into priuate houses craftilie, and leade feelie women captiue, that are laden with sinnes, and ledde with diuerse desyres, alwayes learning and neuer attaining to the trueth. But as Iannes and Mambres resisted Moses, so these also resist the right men corrupt in minde, and concerning the faith reprobate. The wylie Serpent began first with Eue, hee proceeded with Marie the sister of Moses, persisted with the wife of Iob: and after the planting of the Gospell, styrrred vp those zealous women (though not according to knowledge) which sette snares and trappes for Paule and Barnabas. Montanus wrought by Maximilla, the French men by theyr Pucelle de dieu, our englishe Annabaptistes by their holie mayde of Kent: and as it is well gathered yppon Esay, the deuill is euer woont to conuey the leaden bullette of abuse into the iawes of ignoraunce. For what can be so farrre from sence, but the common people wyll bothe beleue it in a feare, and after shrinke in a mutinie.

Exec. 13. 18.

2. Pet. 2. 14.

2. Tim. 3. 6.

7. 3.

Gene. 3. 1.

Num. 12. 1.

Iob. 2. 9.

Rom. 10. 2.

Acts. 13. 51.

As such tyme as Sabbatius the Priest presumed to keepe Easter, according

*of supposed prophecies.*

According to the Iewish rites, no man could dissuade the multitude from beleeuing stedfastlie, that theyr olde Bishop Sifinnius was entered into the Church with a bande of armed men to slaughter them by furye of the sworde, although the verie guilt and terrour of their owne perplexed mindes, were the greatest enimie that could be perceyued at that instant. Againe, at the Funerall of Thomas Duke of Norfolke, my great grandfather, so violent a feare surprised all the multitude, being verie diligent and attentiu to the Sermon, in the Church of Therford, as all ranne out with haste, leauing the Preacher alone in the pulpitte. The lyke fell out in saint Maries Church at Oxforde, in the tyme of King Henrie the eight: and againe, at the death of the late Duke of Sommerfet. They are caused sometyme to beleue that the Starres wyll fall, that domes-daye is at hand, that the world shall be consumed such a tyme with fire, and of late that they should be drowned almost with a second floudde: and therefore much more easilie they wyll be mouued to beleue, that these fained prophetes deale vpon a certayne ground, howsoeuer they be found sometyme to swerue in theyr opinion. Plutarch finding a fitte opportunitie to treate of these thinges, vpon the vision or apparition which affrighted Brutus before his death, reporteth the sound opinions of certayne learned men to haue beene, that no such phantasies durst euer presume to present themselves, to men that eyther were of courage, or of sober skyll to syt and trye the truth, by circumstances rightlie scanned: but vnto women, children, to persons that are sicke or mad, which beeing either rimerous by sexe, infirme by age, or distempered by disease or lunacie, are fittest to haue dealing in these matters.

**L**et vs further note, whether the bookes begin with matters meere-ly future & to come, or rather with notorious euents & accidents already past, which might induce men with a stronger hope, to looke for prooffe of that which is to followe. Thus Potticaries dresse the cup with sugar to make vs drinke vp all, and the deuyl vaunteth of his actes in foutmer tymes, when he seeketh to deceyue vs in the present with his sophistrie. Chrisippus kept a register of all Apollos lyes, and Iulian was abused by the Coniurers and Prophetes, with a note of myracles which were neuer put in execution. If the Prophetes keepe not touch by a certayne daye, they deuile a stoppe or let forthwith, coigning the same in the forge of a pregnant writte. If the lyke euent in all degrees to that fall out, by a diuerse meane and before the tyme, which was prefigured by them: they tell vs that it skylleth not, because with God one thousand yeeres are but as one daye. If nothing happen in these our dayes, the lotte shall be sayde to be adiourned to the benefite of our posteritie. If theyr predictions take place, although it be by chaunce, or as the deuilles stratagemes are wont, when the GOD of

Cicero. de  
diuin. lib. 2.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

kept, like Vestaes lamps, were swept away with a suddaine storme, without forwarning, by the same what should betide, and Merlines prophecies were cheyned to the desks of many Libraries in Englande wyth great reuerence and estimation. What folly were it to esteeme the drugges which comming out of dusty shoppes, were neuer able to doo good to the first aucthor and deuiser of the recite: or to commit our selues, eyther to the warning, or protection of those frivolous conceyts, which haue brought diuerse to theyr ende, but none to recouerie. Miltiades a learned Bishoppe, was woont to presse and vrgē the Paynimes with this argument, against their sayned Oracles, that if they were not able to foretell the tyme of their owne decaye, much lesse to redeeme another from the lyke, according to the reason a minore, which our Sauour maketh in the Gospell against the Scribes and Phariseis: if the lyght which is in you (sayth he) be darknesse, Ipse tenebrae quantū erunt, How great shall the darknesse it selfe be: *maupais nol*

Math. 6. 23.

**T**He merchauntes that are woont to vent these rotten wares, vñ yet a sleight of skyl, more artificiall then any one of all these, in making deintie choyse of their customers with whome they deale, for either they delyuer out their prophecies in grosse Populo credenti mendacijs, To a people which beleeueth lyes, or they seeke to entice (as saint Peter sayes) Animas instabiles, vnstable soules, such as boyes & gynes, whose tender shelles, for want of seasoning, with conuenient experience, are more apt to receyue any light impression of error, or to simple menne that are credulous, or to aged persons that are superstitious, or to Malcontentes that nibble at the smallest flie that appeareth. In aquarum diuisionibus, or to women which are no lesse readie to be deceyued, then to seduce and deceyue others. They enter into priuate houses craftilie, and leade scellie women captiue, that are laden with sinnes, and ledde with diuerse desyres, alwayes learning and neuer attaining to the trueth. But as Iannes and Mambres, resisted Moses, so these also resist the right men corrupt in minde, and concerning the faith reprobate.

Exec. 13. 18.

2. Pet. 2. 14.

2. Tim. 3. 6.

7. 3.

Gene. 3. 1.

Num. 12. 1.

Iob. 2. 9.

Rom. 10. 2.

Acts. 13. 51.

The wylie Serpent began first with Eue, hee proceeded with Marie the sister of Moses, persisted with the wife of Iob: and after the planting of the Gospell, styrred vp those zealous women (though not according to knowledge) which sette snares and trappes for Paule and Barnabas. Montanus wrought by Maximilla, the French men by theyr Pucelle de dieu, our englishe Annabaptistes by their holie mayde of Kent: and as it is well gathered vpon Esay, the deuill is euer woont to conuey the leaden bullette of abuse into the iawes of ignorance. For what can be so farre from sence, but the common people wyll bothe belecue it in a feare, and after shrink in a mutinie.

At such tyme as Sabbatius the Priest presumed to keepe Easter, according

According to the Iewish rites, no man could dissuade the multitude from beleeuing stedfastlie, that theyr olde Bishop Sisiniius was entered into the Church with a bande of armed men to slaughter them by furye of the sworde, although the verie guilt and terroure of their owne perplexed mindes, were the greatest enimie that could be perceyued at that instant. Againe, at the Funerall of Thomas Duke of Norfolke, my great grandfather, so violent a feare surprised all the multitude, being verie diligent and attentiu to the Sermon, in the Church of Therford, as all ranne out with haste, leauing the Preacher alone in the pulpitte. The lyke fell out in saint Maries Church at Oxforde, in the tyme of King Henrie the eight: and againe, at the death of the late Duke of Sommerfet. They are caused sometye to beleue that the Starres wyll fall, that domes-daye is at hand, that the world shall be consumed such a tyme with fire, and of late that they should be drowned almost with a second floudde: and therefore much more easilie they wyll be moued to beleue, that these fained prophetes deale vpon a certayne ground, howsoeuer they be found sometye to swerue in theyr opinion. Plutarch finding a fitte opportunitie to treat of these things, vpon the vision or apparition which affrighted Brutus before his death, reporteth the sound opinions of certayne learned men to haue beene, that no such phantasies durst euer presume to present themselves, to men that eyther were of courage, or of sober skyll to syt and trye the truth, by circumstances rightlie scanned: but vnto women, children, to persons that are sicke or mad, which beeing either timorous by sexe, infirme by age, or distempered by disease or lunacie, are fittest to haue dealing in these matters.

**L**et vs further note, whether the bookes begin with matters meere ly future & to come, or rather with notorious euent & accidents already past, which might induce men with a stronger hope, to looke for prooffe of that which is to followe. Thus Potticaries dresse the cup with sugar to make vs drinke vp all, and the deuyl vaunteth of his actes in fouthmer tymes, when he seeketh to deceyue vs in the present with his sophistrie. Chrisippus kept a register of all Apollons lyes, and Iulian was abused by the Coniurers and Prophetes, with a note of myracles which were neuer put in execution. If the Prophetes keepe not touch by a certayne daye, they deuise a stoppe or let forthwith, coigning the same in the forge of a pregaunt witte. If the lyke euent in all degrees to that fall out, by a diuerse meane and before the tyme, which was prefigured by them: they tell vs that it skylleth not, because with God one thousand yeeres are but as one daye. If nothing happen in these our dayes, the lotte shall be sayde to be adiourned to the benefite of our posteritie. If theyr predictions take place, although it be by chaunce, or as the deuilles stratagemes are woont, when the GOD of

Cicero. de  
diuin. lib. 2.



## *A defensative against the poyson*

Cont. lul.

hostes allows him to preuaile against the reprobate: it must be recommended with a marueilous adoo, to bewitch a number: so that to conclude with Ciryll, Tacent spiritus, dominantur praestigia: Good spiritus hold their peace, but illusions and deceytes beare all the stroke among them. At Delphos, many deintie sleights were vsed, to mayntayne the credite of the place: for it was a principle among them, that vnlesse the aultar shooke, no perfect aunswere could be giuen: so when the matter graueled the Priestes so deepe, as they could neyther cast an outward flourish nor decide a doubt, all thinges were styll within the vaulte, otherwise the pinnes and vices were employed with skyll, and not the frame or tabernacle, onelie but the vault it selfe, was made to tremble with a signe of maiestie. Thus play the painting Prophets against whome we speake, for when they know not which way to turne, nor what to saye, they take a tyme to pawse, afterward they perswade the person which demaundeth counsaile at theyr hand, to fast for the space of certayne dayes, not because they take delyght in fasting, which is one of the best meanes of putting Sathan and his blacke garde to flight: but that in the meane tyme, they maye haue leysure to take breath, and to examine circumstaunces as well of the person as of the matter, wherevpon although they can delyuer out no certayne ground whereon to builde, yet may they coygne a probable conceyte, whereby to gayne, or at the least, resoluue according to the parties humour with whome they deale (which some call conformitie) preferring the skyll thereof, before bothe trueth and conscience.

Of one thing, I would wishe all godlie men to beware aboue all the rest, that these bookes of prophecie, haue not beene written, painted or sette downe according to the prompting and suggesting of the deuyll, who sildome fayleth of a stroke in these secrete mysteries. Thinges maye be countenaunced with a cunning vayle, which haue an ouglie shape: and therefore it is not vnlyke, that he which tooke advantage by the blushing of an apple to conueie deceyte, wyll playe the Paynter also for a neede, to bewitch the simple. I must confesse, that for mine owne part, I detest both painted pamphlettes and Astrologie, for many reasons, as appeareth by my large discourse, but for none so much, as that they may be made a maske for coniuring, and a shaddow for apostasie. What would you more, the Prophetes that spread abroad out these peacockes plumes, are childishe, not in mallice (as saint Paule declares) but in vnderstanding: they pamper vs with olde wifes tales, they giue care to fables, and to genealogies without end, which breede strife without profite, seeking to be Doctours of the lawe, when they neyther knowe what they speake, nor whereof they affyrme, for neyther can they tell nor prophecie (sayth Tertullian) what tendeth to their owne ouerthrowe.

1. Co. 14. 20.

1. Tim. 4. 7.

1. Tim. 1. 4.

Tertul. in  
Apologer,

*of supposed prophecies.*

It was once my happe to be examined, vpon the sight of a certayne paynted Treatise of this kinde, garnished with sundry beastes & byrds, and fitter (as I gather) by some freendes of mine, who made good sport thereat, for a chuldishe game, then a sober iudgement. It is certayne that I neuer was admitted to this Sibillas Oracle, although I could haue beene as well content to feede mine eyes without offence for any thing I knowe, as others were to content theyr humours, in a wyldernesse of follie. But whether it be probable that eyther I did euer see the same, or make account thereof, or would affoord expence and waste of time which is most precious, to fancies of this kinde which are most friuolous: let them conceyue that eyther are acquainted with my selfe, or wyll vouchsafe to reade, and scanne the reasons of this booke, which hauing beene collected in a booke of notes, out of the full course of all my reading, from the fifteenth yeere of mine age vntyll this daye, vpon a mortall mallice against prophecies, in respect of some progenitours, and auncestors of mine which smarted, for presuming ouermuch vpon their hopes, should neuer haue beene recommended to the printe, if meere necessitie, and care to satisfie the world heerein, had not preuayled at the length, against my bashfull and retyrate humour. For mine owne parte, I alwayes conceyued them to be the froth of follie, the scumme of pride, the shipwracke of honour, and the poyson of nobilitie. But notwithstanding, forsomuch as I can gather by report of some deere freendes of mine, who sawe the gewgawe in the keeping of another (that esteemed it too much) it should appeare eyther to haue beene ouer flourished in a paynters shoppe, with matter correspondent to theyr humors, which delyght in newes, or else to haue beene drawne vpon the gesse of one Verdungus: who during the tyme of king Henrie the eight, seeking according to the guise of such badde persons, to content and please the moodes of certayne Princes, which were then in warre and deepe vnkindnesse with the King: gaue out in writing that the Realme should be giuen vppe, In prædam diuersis animantibus, for a praye or spoyle to sundrie beastes: The certaintie he durst not lymitte, nor set downe as it seemes, for feare of beeing taken with a grosse and shamefull lye: neyther durst hee publishe or reueale the pointes and reasons, wherevpon the iudgement stoode, because the man himselfe beeing posted forward with a wrekefull humour of reuenge, sought rather by this meane, to make his voice a trumpet of encouragement, then a messenger of tribulatio. For prooffe wherof we are to note the ende, & cheefely that the King was layde to rest with his Fathers, in cōuenient time when Verdungus hauing made a shamefull wrack, both of conscience and credite, was scorned and deryded for his vaine presumption without ground, and mallice without moderation. This may suffice to shaddowes of pretence, and to descrie the groundes of prophe-

Scepper.  
lib. 5. cap. 4.



## *A defensatine against the poyson*

cies, eyther written in olde bookes, or paynted with freshe colours: nowe let vs proceede as we haue begonne, to the substance of aucthoritie.

- We must therefore note an argument, that falleth out eyther by comparison, or by effect against all prophecies: for where as God hath promised by the Prophete Ieremie, that whosoever calleth vpon his name and giueth eare to his voice, as to the sole and onely shepheard of his soule: *Bona sibi erunt, & viuet anima eius*, Good thinges shall be-ryde him in this world, and his soule shall lyue, his plantes shall prosper, his counsayles take effect, his corne and oyle shall multiplie, and his chyl dren lyke oliue braunches, shall enclose his table round about: So on that other side, all they that followe straunge Gods and straunge Oracles, that make more account of Belzebub then Christe, of Garizim then Sion, of the prince of darknesse, then of the morning Starre, of errour because it pleaseth, then trueth because it smarteth: shall sowe but neuer reape, presse the grape but neuer drinke the wine, bruisse the oliue, but not be annoynted with the oyle, and eyther pine and sterue with Tantalus, betweene diuersitie of pleasures, or feede with a false hunger, and not be satisfied: for though the deuyl seeme to weepe and sigh for our disgrace, it is but as lyke a Crocadile, to bring vs neerer to the Lee, though sometyme he promise golden mountaynes, gallaunt citties, and the world it selfe, as he dyd in vaine to Christe (who was possessed by inheritaunce of all, not by the deuilles courtesie) his onely purpose is, to lure vs to the trappe of treason, his fauours are but fau- cies and make no man fatte, his glorie lyke a steyned robe which can giue no dignitie, his seruice as a nette to catch the winde, but makes no man fortunate, and why so, because *Pactum cum* (a) *inferno non sta- bit*, The bargaine which is made with hell: shall neuer stand, neyther is
- (a) *Esay. 28. 15.* it possible that so corrupt and fowle a roote, should putte forth any braunch of comfort to the godlie. Disdayne and pride of heart (sayth God by the Prophet) hath abused those, which dwelling in the caues and hollowe places of the rockes, are not ashamed notwithstanding to stretch out their handes, to take holde of the toppes of hylles, &c. But when our eyes are most desirous to behold, he wyll cause them to wa- ter: when our senses are most sharpe and quicke, he wyll cause them to woonder, when our wittes are thought to be most pregnant, he wyll daunt them with the beames of maiestie, and when we haue aduanced and built our nestes in the toppes of Cedar trees, yet wyll hee breake the verie nest egge it selfe, and crushe our off-spring with dishonour.
- (b) *Aug. ep. 66.* Wherefore let vs gather by Saint Augustines lesson, what a madnesse it were to commit those thinges, which shall be (b) punished for ever, by
- (c) seeking to eschew the feare which can affright but for a moment. These prophecies are worthily compared to (c) *Colloquintida*, which beeing put

*of supposed prophecies.*

put into the pottle with other herbes, wyll poyson the man of God, vn-  
 lesse he be admoished, by the chyldren of the Prophetes to beware of  
 it: in lyke manner to the drugge, (d) Quod gustatum adfert mortem, (d)  
 which beeing tasted bringeth death, to Snakes in a greene, cankers in a  
 Rose, Aconitum in an Aple, and to rockes vnder water, because the ves-  
 selles cracke before the daunger be discovered. What comfort Ochozi-  
 as (e) reaped by conferring with the god of Acaron, or (f) Saule by cal-  
 ling vp a damned spirite, hath beene specified before, and though some  
 seeke to wipe away the credite of the last example, by supposing that  
 King Saule was rather plagued for the (g) murder of the godly Priestes  
 at Nob, then for consulting with the sorceresse, it wyll not serue, be-  
 cause the Chronicles pierce neerer to the quicke, adioyning this one  
 speeding blowe to the multitude of other sinnes: (h) Quod pythoni-  
 sam consuluerit, The more that Pharao endeouored & straued against the  
 ministers of God, the deeper he was plunged into plagues, according to  
 the sentence of the Prouerbes, (i) Impius cum in profundum venerit,  
 when the wicked man is come into the depth, he becommeth carelesse,  
 and is rewarded with dishonour. Thus Enath and Arphad hanning been  
 tormented in the sea, for hearing of vngodly thinges, could not rest for  
 (k) carefulnesse: Semeias the false prophet, was verie gallant and lusty,  
 in sending out his prophecies in the name of G O D, but their reward  
 was an irreuokable curse, that neither he nor any one of his (l) posterity,  
 should remaine in the midst of the people. The wicked Ammonites,  
 for enclining and lending their vnstable eares to false prophetes, were  
 giuen vp into the handes (Fabricantium (l) interitum ) of men that are  
 skylfull in procuring mischeefe and destruction: and as Saint Ierome  
 writes, that God knowes not the women which are paynted, because  
 they carry not that face or fauour which his hands haue made: so when  
 when we flie from Oracles, to him vpon necessitie and not for looue, his  
 answer wyll be, Num quid ad interrogandum me venistis, viuit Do-  
 minus: non noui vos: Come you to demaund aduise of mee, as sure as  
 God lyueth I knowe you not: taking knowledge in that sence which  
 the holy Ghost dooth in another place, Abraham (m) Nesciuit nos, &c.  
 that is not acknowledging vs for his, in respect of our vnwoorthinesse.  
 Wherefore though the king of Ammon, swell with presumption and  
 pride euen tyll he burst: yet error shall be his guide, and ignorance  
 his ouerthrowe. Note further, that at such tyme as Senacherib, was  
 ryfeling among his fayned gods and Oracles, his owne sonnes deuised  
 to make him away in the Temple. After Manasses had giuen him-  
 selfe quite ouer to (n) witchcraft and sorcerie, depending wholie vp-  
 pon Soothsayers, and such as had familiars, &c. God promised to sende  
 such heavy plagues, as the peoples eares should glowe to heare the very  
 sounde of them.

Iob. 6. 6.

4. Reg. 4. 1.

1. Reg. 27.

1. Reg. 22. 17

1. Par. 10. 3.

Prou 8. 3.

Iere. 49. 25.

Iere. 29. 31.

Ezec. 20. 3.

Eesai. 63. 16.

4. Reg. 19. 37.



## A defensative against the poyson

- (o) Valerian (o) the Emperor, had no sooner opened an eare, to this kind of men, as we finde reported by the good byshoppe of Alexandria, but forthwith he was cast open, to the contempt and scorne of his enemies.
- (p) (p) Basilides, Saturnius, and all the Guostici had vnfortunate & wretched endes by like deserte, (q) Ludibria eorum deliget, et peccata, retribuit illis, for God will make choise of theyr derisions, and rewarde them for theyr iniquities. Maximinus, an other tyraunt and most execrable Emperor, being by nature exceeding timerous, & ielous of the smallest lease that mooued in his sight, sette vppon his rest vppon the prouidence of spirites, and what gayned he thereby? Forsoth, for an admonition, he was first visited both with plague and famine at one clappe: and when this whip coulde not reclaime him from this wicked haunte, wherein he spent so many yeeres, a foule impostume brake out of hys lower partes, and eating vppon his entrailles, as it were by peece meale, replenished (r) the carcase with gnawing wormes, which together with the putrefaction of the caule of fatte, made so noysome and contagious a stincke, as his deereft freendes were gladde to keepe out of his chamber. (s) Maxentius persisting in his sleepe was throwne into Tiber, and as all the princes before Constantine, and diuers after, were infected with this malladie: so likewise shall we finde theyr endes, to haue been according to theyr enterpryse.
- (t) It appeareth in the story, that all the Prophets, Astrologers, and coniuers of Egypt, vndertooke vppon theyr credite, to warraunt & assure (t) Licinius of conquest against Constantine, if he durst beginne the warre, and yet he was most gallantly discomfited, and not onely hadde beene taken prisoner, but put to death also, if Constantine presuminge that this crosse woulde call him backe, and teach him to acknowledge both his owne offence, and the cheefest author of his good, had not giuen in charge to all his campe, as Caesar dealt for the sauing of
- (u) Brutus, and David (x) of Absalon, that no man shoulde lay hand vppon his personne. But as we finde by dayly prooffe, that ingrateful natures are enraged, rather then amended with a ientile bitte, so thys vnrinde and faithlesse monster (y) retourning backe, to the wilde encouragements of his wonted freendes: lost his state by pryde, his hope by folly, and his life by iustice. (z) Iulian the runnegate, hauing beene perswaded by the wise men of Athens, and cheefely by one called Maximus: that he alone should eclipse the glory and renowme of Alexander, by the valowre of his worthy deedes, began to swell with ouerweening of himselfe, and to thinke that more was in him then any: but within a whyle this gallaunt, was sore wounded, (by the deuill as Callistus an officer in his owne campe did report) to the death, as others wryte, by such a secrete ennemie as would neuer come to challenge his reward: which prooues the stroke of God to be more mighty, then the
- prac-

*of supposed prophecies.*

practise of the worlde, and iustifies the warning of the Prophet Esay (&) that mishappes should light vpon the wicked, whose originall they should not vnderstand nor reache vnto. But it is certaine that Libanius, the iangling and vngodly Sophister, was perswaded that hee did greate honour to this monster, after he was deade, in calling him (a) Alumnus, discipulum afflorem daemonum, a foster-childe, an impe a scholar, and assistant of the deuils. That *invidium* or himme of victorie which was songe vppon the riddance of the tyrant, out of the way, by the cittizens of Antioche in open streetes: Vbi nunc tua sunt O maxime ostolide vaticinia, O thou that art the greatest, O thou foole, or to ioine the partes of speeche together, O thou that art the greatest foole, where are nowe thy prophecies, since God the Father, and Iesus Christ his son, haue had the conquest, futeeth a great deale better with such an ende, wherevnto himselfe alludeth in some sort, by casting vppe his bloude, and roring out wyth Caine, after he was wounded both in soule & body to the death, *invidiam* O Galilean (for so it pleased him to call his God in scorne) thou hast conquered. So long as Nero chased Prophets out of his country, thinges proceeded in some resonable sorte, but after once by practise and encouragement of the king of Armenia he was (b) Initiatus Magorum sacris, entered into the profession of the Magicians, or wise men, good fortune gaue him ouer. Constantine the sonne of Irene, setting foorth against the Prince of Bulgaria, by aduise of (c) Pancratus an Astrologer was vtterly discomfited Don Iannes de Barbuda a noble man of Castile in Spayne, of greater courage then eyther temperaunce, or witte, hauing beene perswaded, ouer lightly by a simple hermite that without the losse of any one mans life hee should recouer the kingdome of Granada, from the Moores, woulde needes aduenture to beginne the enterpryse, with one thousand footemen, and three hundred horse, a thing almost incredible to men of skylle & iudgment in those causes, whereuppon the king of Castile hauing gotten knowledge and vnderstanding, of the plotte, together with the marshal and the gouernour of Cordoba, and comparing the smal hope of good with the likelihoode of some great inconuenience to fall out, vppon thys desperate attempt, diswaded him from marching, or proceeding any further in this enterpryse, by reasons of great consequence. For, firste he thought it lawfull, in no sort by aduenturing vppon impossible conceites, and slender hold to tempt the mercies of almighty God, and as it were to presse him in these latter dayes, perforce to the working of a miracle. Then did he lay before his eyes, the daunger that might arise vnto the realme by breach of leage, without a charge of wronges vppon the Moores, or warre denounced according to the law of armes, & by a Heralde opely. Moreouer, he assured him, that it neither stoode with the credite of a man of action, to wexe wilde and desperate wyth

(&) Esay. 47. 11.

(a) Soc. lib. 3. cap. 19.

(b) Dion in Neron.

(c) Zon Annal. tom. 3.

Paul. Dial. Esteuan de Gartom. 2.



## *A defensative against the poyson*

out a cause, nor with the conscience and pitty of a Christian, to leese so many resolut and gallaunt persons, in a shambles of vncircumcision, which were ready for defence of trueth to hazarde bloode, and life, in a field of honor. Last of all, he warned and aduised him to staye, if it were but in thys respect, that whatsoeuer should be gayned by this enterprise, wise men would impute to chaunce, and whatsoeuer should be lost, to folly. But as we see that whē it pleaseth God, to bring any matter of effect to passe, eyther to the punishment of sinne, or for the glory of himselfe, he blindeth them so that they can not see the way to scape: before he sincke them to the bottome of disgrace, so this braue knight reiecting whatsoeuer was or coude be sayde, against his resolution in this poynt, helde on a wilfull course, and was no sooner entred wythin the skirt or border of the Moores, but his forlorne hope was cut in peeces, and himselfe in like manner slaine to beare them companye. A meete euent for so rash and fonde a generall. The Moores of Granada, taking armes at an other time, in hope to requite this brauery vpon encouragment: of a certayne glosing Prophet, who assured the that vnder his conduct, they should recover both theyr former lawes and liberties, lost theyr lyues for theyr aduenture. The young Duke of Viseo in Portingale, hauing once beene pardoned by Don Iuan el grande, at the suite of the Queene his sister, was encouraged Per los necios Mathematicos, Astrologos, to rebell againe, with assurance that he should obtaine the crowne: whereof he not onely sayled, but beside was deprined of his life by the course of ordinary iustice.

Idem in lo-  
seph. 2.

Idem in hist  
Port. pag.  
82.4.

Paul Æmil.  
Haillan.  
lib. 13.

Nichol. Gil.  
in Annal.

Æn. Sil.  
hist. Bohem.  
pag. 123.

Cor. Tac.  
Annal. lib. 2

I finde reporte both in the Spanishe and french histories, of certayne rinde vnciuill men, or Sheepeheardes as some teporte, which vnder colour of a prophecy, that they should conquer, and subdue the holy land taked a sort of vagabonds and bankruptes together, who falling forthwith to spoyle and robbery, were hanged vpon Poles and libbets, almost in euery prouince as they passed by, before that any one of them could eyther kisse the holy crosse, or adore in the Sepulcher. The wyfe of Enguerran, the French kinges treasurer, endeouoring by sorcery to cutte short theyr time, who were the cheefest instruments of her husbands trouble and disgrace, and to redeeme him out of duraunce, was a meane to bring him by so much sooner to hys ende, and her selfe into great misery.

The Castle of Sion in Bohemlande, from whence certayne foolishhe curates prophecied, that the trueth should spring, was beaten flat downe to the grownde, and he that built the same, was hanged with his adherentes. Firmius Catus, encouraged a certayne gallant gentleman in Rome, Per Chaldaeorum promissa, per Magorum sacra, per somniorum interpretes, by the warraunt of Astrologers, the misteries of Magicke, and interpreters of Dreames; to take armes against Cæsar, but in the  
ende

*of supposed prophecies.*

ende the feeble man was glad to kyll himselfe, rather then hee would abide the seueritie of publique execution. Herodotus a Paynim, is not ashamed to cōfesse that Cræsus being miserablie beguiled by Apollos Oracle, *Non perfarum sed suum eueritit emperium*, ouerthrowe not the gouernment of the Persians, but his owne, and Catiline by such another put his lyfe in icopardie.

The cittie of Epidamnnum, demanding counsaile of Apollos Oracle, whether they should commit themselues, to the protection of the state of Corinth or not, had counsaile not to be afraid, and aduenturing vpon the same, were forthwith discomfited. A certayne prophecie giuen out and published in Rome at the remoouing of the Emperour Tiberius, that he should neuer returne any more, occasioned the death of many well disposed citizens: who venturing too farre vpon this tickle ground, with an earnest care to discharge theyr countrey from the clog of seruitude, were cutte off by crueltie. For though Tiberius vpon a deepe conceyued and imprinted ielousie, would neuer after dwell within the walles, yet stil he halled within a ken, for the space of eleue yeeres together, that is, tyll all the state was tyred with his tyranny. About the same tyme Furius Scribonianus was exiled, *Quod finem principis per Chaldaeos scrutatus esset*. Because hee had enquired after the Princes death by Chaldæes and Astrologers. It appeareth further by Thucydides, that how many soeuer, planted any confidence in these execrable artes, were shamefully beguiled at one time or other, & that all honor doone to the professours of the same, was vaine and without profite. Whereof may we be assured by the Starres, when Mæcius Pomposianus, was put to death by Domitian the bloody tyraunt, for this cause onely, that he was reported to haue bene borne vnder a regall constellation: for if it were imperiall indeede, why dyd he not enioy the promise of the Planets, if he were preuented of that hap, then must we byd Astrologers adue, which lyed beyōd all measure, in making that imperiall or regall which was bothe fatall and vnfortunate. The same Domitian, against whome the blood of many blessed Martirs, called for reuēge incessantly, from vnderneath the aultar, hauing vtterly abandoned himselfe to the directiō of Planets, was murdered in that very minute, wherof his prophets gaue him warning to forbear. and by the person who could neuer haue had free access vnto his presence, in so suspicious, so watchfull and so dangerous a tyme but vnder colours of discovering the packe, which the tyraunt feared. If any man demaund of me, what the Planets wrought in this: I say nothing, for the same Astrologers no doubt, who made the way, as well by proffering a iust cause to the tyrant, of admitting him that should performe the deede, as by encouraging the partie which should execute, by the peremptorie manner of deliuering the prophecie, in words which might expresse no bare attempt, but a prof-

Herod. li. 1.

Salust. in

Cōiur, catil.

Thucid. lib. 1.

Taci. Annal.

lib. 4.

Annal. li. 12

Suet. in

Domit.

Apo. 6. 9. 10

Der. in Bas.

Ciryl.

perous



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

perous and speedy ende of the practise, which should be sette in hand, were bothe authors and actors of the Tragedie.

Bassianus Caracalla, proceeding in the warre with Mesopotamia, gaue order to a faithfull counsayler of his, called Maternianus, whome he left as his cheefest agent and vicegerent at Rome, to procure the meeting of all prophets, Astrologers & coniurers together vpon this point: whether any plot or practise, were any where in hand, against his person or authority. Maternianus executed with all speed, the resolution of his master, and finding by an vniuersal verdict and consent among them, that one Macrinus a Colonell, who had charge in the field, at that verie instant vnder Cæsar, should bereaue him of his lyfe, aduertised these tydings by the next dispatch, finding himselfe not a lyttle satisfied and pleased with so fitte a meane, of wreaking an olde quarrell betweene himselfe and the partie. The Poste arriuing at a tyme, wherein the Emperour was exceeding earnest and attentiu to his sport, he commaunded Macrinus, who, as God would haue it was next at hand to breake vpe the packette, and enforme him touching the contentes at the tyme of counsaile. By this meane came Macrinus to descric the drifte, wherevpon as one abashed verie much, eyther with the mallice of his enimie, in seeking to reuēge a priuate grudge, with a Princes arme, or with the presumption of Astrologers, who rashlie had assigned him a parte to playe, that neuer came within his thought before that tyme resolved, that considering the sudden censures of his maister in such cases as concerned himselfe any waye, it was not possible to set downe any myddle course, but that eyther Caracalla before the next aduertisement, or Macrinus verie quicklie after must be sure to die for it, wherevpon preferring selfe-looue before duetifull regarde, and the passion of a carnall man, before the reason of a faithfull minister: made choyse of a certayne resolute, or rather desperate companion, who had charge of footmen vnder him, to stabbe his maister as hee withdrew himselfe, for a necessarie cause from company.

Heerein we are to note, what trueth or duety springeth from this bitter roote, or what benefite to those that builde vpon so false a ground, for who can thinke that any cause in heauen, could procure this Princes death, where so many diuerse accidentes are found to come betweene, which the wisest man aliue could neyther see by learning, nor preuent by pollicie. Besides, although the coniurers eyther paynted out Macrinus to the showe, or gaue some priuie lyght, whereby Maternianus vpon mallice might imagine and adioygne the rest, yet it is certaine, that tyll theyr knauish heades were pacte together, it came neuer in the thought of Macrinus, to performe the deed; so that I deeme them to be rather mouers & abettors, as those other were of whom I spake before, then forewarners of the mischeefe. If Bassianus had been eyther so wise

*of supposed prophecies.*

as not to meddle with these messengers of hell, or so warie as to credite what they sayde, since hee would needes depend vppon theyr heste, hee might haue gathered vpo the diuels warning, to trudge to the gallowes (at such tyme as once before he appeared in the shape of Commodus) that he should be surely spedde at one tyme or other. But, such is the iustice of our God, as he correcteth vs according to the kinde of our offence, that no man may receiue encouragement to persist in wickednesse, and besides, heere is a glimpse of that which Tacitus sets downe, that *Quæ in fatis sunt etiam præsignificata non vitantur*, what soeuer God will haue, shall come to passe, although we be forwarned of the drift, and which may seeme most straunge of all, the course which is resolved to preuent the same, dooth oftentimes fall out to be the meane or instrument, of putting it in execution.

Annal. li 3.

Of latter time we may remember, that a countreman of ours, exceedingly wel learned, both in the tongues, and in philosophy, which some time professed greeke in Cambridge, and forsooke his country for the matter of religion, at the beginning of Queene Maryes raigne, was notwithstanding, so much delighted wyth keeping both time and measure with the starres, as he would doo nothing, not so much as take a iourney, without casting and reuoluing, first the iudgement of the stars about the same: but hys rewarde was sutable to others, that haue gon before, for when the Planets promised most fortunate successe, in that which he had then contriued in his heade, the man was clapped vnder hatches by a wyle, and brought ouer as a prisoner. An other of his calling in that tyme, who most vndutifully tooke armes against his Soueraigne, vnder colour of expelling forrainers, as if Queenes were such wardes, as they might neyther treat nor marry without leaue, confessed to the byshoppe of winchester, who came into the Tower to examine him, that he had neuer dealt in this attempt, which soyled bothe hys house, his credite and hys life, but by encouragement of a certaine prophecie, that he should preuaile against his Prince, by populer deuotion. I will slippe ouer diuers of our owne examples heere at home, because, to frette a fore that hath beene sometimes launched, with conuenient severity, and now is ouergrowne with time, were an oversight, besides, the duty wherein by nature I am bounde, to some of them that haue beene spiced, and bewitched by this dunge, concluding with the iudgement of the wryter, and reporter of the ciuill warres in Fraunce: who professing himselfe to be a zealous protestant, ascribeth notwithstanding, the resolution of his fellowes, touching the siege of Poictiers, from whence they returned with dishonour, to theyr over much beleeuing in the prophecies of Nostradam, who wrote that in that very moneth, the besiged should be forced to giue vppe their hold, and the negligence of the mighty should tourne to theyr confusion, as

Histo.ire  
des trou.  
li. 8. pa. 284.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

if he should haue paynted out the kinges colde care, and slacke supplies to the Duke of Guise, in meere perticularity: for God (sayth mine author, who forbad vs by the mouth of the Prophet Dauid, to walke in Magnis et mirabilibus, in matters that are greate and wonderfull, and farre aboute the compasse of our reache, was not pleased with presumption: He recounteth moreouer, a certaine pretended vision at the same time, to like effect, and of like vanity.

If then all those which doo but onely listen & giue eare to prophets, and beleue theyr dreames, be subiect to the wrath and plague of God, what shall become of the Caterpillers and trinkets themselves: whose onely labour, is to destroy young frye, to spoyle good fruite, to praye vpon the simple, and encrease the numbers of the reprobate. The Prophet Ieremie, hauing roundly glaunced at the fault, foretels the fall, and that they shall be sure to perishe, (a) *Ignem et gladio*, that is wyth the fire of vniuersity, and the sworde of execution. Againe (b) *Gladius ad Chaldaeos et diuinos eius*, & which is chesely worthy noting, this slaughter beares the name, *Vltionis* (c) *Domini*, vltionis templi, of the reuenge of God, and of his church &c The like fauour for all the worlde is to be founde at the handes of Ezechiell, (d) the Prophet, denouncing that the scourge of God should hange for euer, ouer the heads of glozing prophets, *Qui vident vana et diuinant mendacia*, which see vayne thinges and diuinelies, &c. I am not ignoraunt, that our Astrologers excuse themselves from standing in this ranke, but whensoever they can prooue, or any man that deales with them shall iustifie, that the prophecies which they giue out, are not as deeply Vana and mendacia, as those against which the Prophet spake, I wyll admitt theyr exception, that is ad *Calendas Graecas*, for so long as there is one diuiner, by profession, there wyll be lyes of ordinary. Sometime, they are termed in the Scriptures, *Rebelles* (e) *Iumini*, rebelles against the light, sometyme, (f) *Fratres draconum*, the brethren of Dragons, sometyme, (g) *inimici* for the godly, and instruments of theyr owne unhappinesse, whereas Ephraim escaped and flewe farre away like a byrde, whose glory was *Ab vtero a conceptu*, a partu from the wombe, from the time wherin we were conceined in the wombe, and from the birth whereby we were deliuered, to the seruice of our redeemer. If we list to scanne theyr pedigree, they are (h) *Semites Canaan non Iuda*, the seede of Canaan not of Iuda, if theyr allies, (i) *Samaria* is theyr elder sister, if the lotte of theyr enheritaunce, it shall be (k) *Regnum eorum et tumultum eorum*, a kingdome full of slaughter and rebellion: Their table is, *Mensa* (l) *dæmoniorum*, theyr dyet (m) *colloquuntur*, theyr gestic, in profundo (n) *infernus*, in the depth of hel, their mirth shall (o) be folded vp in (p) *Superbia fumi* in the pride of a smoke or in a vapour, to conclude God hath so crushed theyr vnmeasurable boasting, as we finde by Ieremye

Psal. 130. 1.

(a)

Ier. 14. 5.

(b)

Ier. 50. 35.

(c)

Ier. 51. 10.

(d)

Eze. 9. 10.

(e)

Iob. 30. 29.

(f)

Iob. 30. 29.

(g)

Osee. 9. 10.

(h)

Dan. 13. 56

Eze. 16. 29.

(i)

Eze. 16. 46.

(k)

4. Esd. 2. 2.

(l)

1. Cor. 10. 21.

(m)

4. Re. 4. 40.

(n)

Pro. 7. 18.

(o)

Esay. 9. 10.

(p)

Ier. 2. 7.

*of supposed prophecies.*

myethat they shall preuaile in nothing. Theyr faces are Tanquam (q) nigredo ollæ, like the soote or blacknesse of a pottle, and theyr throte like an open (r) sepulcher. If we seeke to iudge them by theyr ende, neyther are theyr leaues delightfull, nor theyr blossomes gracefull, nor theyr frutes restoratiue. Theyr messengers runne without (s) commission, and theyr ende is without honour. Euill shall come vpon them like paynes vpon a woman that trauaileth of childe, yet shall they neuer (s) vnderstand the fountaine whence they spring (t) Seperati sunt in diem malum, they are seperated against that heauy day, wherein wee shall be serued all to gether, with the writte of Nemo (u) sit excusatus, death (x) shall march before them and the deuill shall come after the, Morientur (y) in lecto, et tamen cum tormentis, they shall dye in their bedds an yet with torment. They shall be dragged downe to hell, with all theyr chippes of childish vanities, and sleepe with the vncircumcised and (z) because they were deuisors of deceit, Abibunt in confusionem, they shall depart into confusion, where they build, God will ouerthrow, where they (a) plant, he will supplant, where they punish, he wil prosper, Statilius the Romaine, if we beleue Lactantius, was of the minde, that of all men they were to be shunned and auoided most, which cared not howe many lyes were solde, for one ounce of theyr vayne glorye. If it be demaunded how so many of them, liuing in contempt of God, and of his lawes, can thrue so well, as we may see by prooffe they doo, mine aunswer is, that no man should be iudged by his fortune in thys life, but by the fauour which he findeth in an other. The wicked man which flourished like a Cedar of Libanus, was suddenly so cleane remooued out of sight, as the very place it selfe could not be founde, the Sunne shineth (c) both vpon the good and badde, and the world which is so sharpe a stepdame to the godly, must needes perfourme the parte and office of a louing mother to the reprobate. Etenim (d) multo tempore, non sinere peccatoribus ex sententia agere, sed statim ultiones adhibere, magni beneficii est indicium, for not to suffer sinners to transgresse according to theyr humor, a long time together, but to reuenge forthwith, is a token of great fauour, and to the same effect is that place of Ezechiell, auferetur (e) zelus meus a te et quiescam, et non reuertur, amplius, my zeale or tender shall be taken from thee, I will take my rest and be no more offended, (f) Quem enim diligit Dominus corripit, for God chastiseth the childe whom he loueth &c. But yet beware of a still water, for it is exceeding deepe, and of a couert ennemy, for he meaneth mischiefe. Blanditiæ diaboli ecclesiæ plus offecere quàm minæ the flatteries of the deuill hath done more hurte to the church, saith (g) Barnarde, then his threatens and menacies. But what though some fewe be left unpunished, that the hardnesse of theyr hearts, may prepare the for a sharper scourge, prooues this that all the rest which perish, eyther

L 1.2.

by

(q) Nahu. 2. 10.

(r) Psal. 5. 10.

(s) Esay. 47. 11.

(t) Amos. 6. 3.

(u) 3. Reg. 15. 22.

(x) Abac. 3. 3.

(y) Eze. 31. 18.

(z) 4. Esd. 12. 2.

(a) Mal. 1. 4.

(b) Psal. 36. 33

(c) Mat. 5. 45.

(d) 2. Mac. 1. 36,

(e) Eze. 16. 42.

(f) Pro. 3. 12.

(g) Barnad.

in epist.



## *A defensative against the poyson*

- by the rope, the racke, or sworde, or that make themselues a way, being drowned in dispayre, are not examples plaine and euident inough, to conuince theyr blindnesse: which eyther with that caitife Iudas, sell
- (h) Mat. 26. 15. (h) Christ for thirty pence, or theyr enheritaunce with Esau, for a messe
- (i) Gen. 25. 34. (i) of pottage: Our Lord forbidde, for some are chastised for our example, others spared for theyr greater plague in an other life, and many by the grace and mercy of almighty God, are preserued to repentance: wherefore, as we may reprocue theyr dealinges vpon iust cause, so can we not dispayre of theyr repentaunce, without presumption. Rules are too firmly grounded, to be shaken or infringed by examples, God beareth with the deuill as a minister of (k) wrath, although hee loue
- (k) Iob. 1. (k) him not, he suffers Cockle to spring vppe with the Come, and yet hee
- (l) Mat. 13. 29. (l) likes it not: he leaues the wicked to their slipping out of one sin to another, though he cause it not (n) Expectat Dominus vt cum iudicii dies aduenerit, in plenitudine peccatorum, et peccatis in fine deuolutis puniat,
- (m) Ose. 13. 9. (m) God expecteth that when the day of iudgement cometh, in the fulnes
- (n) 2. Mac. 6. 15. (n) of sins, and when sinnes haue proceeded to theyr ende, he may correcte and punish vs after such a sort, as the latter ende of those men, is like to
- (o) Theo. lib. 3. (o) be worse then the beginning. How fortunately the false prophets which are condemned in the text, were at the length rewarded, for theyr labor hath bene told before. We may further note, that Montanus, and Maximilla hanged themselues, Theodorus another of that sorte, was let fall out of the ayre by certaine damned spirites, whom he put in trust to succor him. The prophets with in certaine recopence of the fine which
- (p) Iosep anti. li. 17. cap. 3. (p) Pherora payde in theyr behalfe, assured hir, that her heyres shoulde enioy the crowne, were put to the sworde foorthwith, by the kinge, wyth all extremity.
- (q) Li. 20. ca. 2. (q) At such time as (q) Theodas, of whom we find some mention in the Acts, had assembled a multitude of simple soules together, vpon a sted fast promise, that he woulde deuide the riuer Iordan, and exceede Elias in the gift of miracles, Cuspis Fadus, the Lieutenant of that coutry, vnder Caesar, set vpon them vnawares, and not onely stroke off the prophets heade, but slaughtered a number of his disciples. The like execution was done by (s) Felix vpon such an other, and againe by Iustine the Emperour, vpon a certaine Iewe, that tooke vpon him to be Moses. The Prophets that threwe downe themselues from a rocke, in hope to be releued by their Gods, were crushed into peeces. A certaine Hermite called Peter, prognosticating that king Iohn, shoulde dye with out all fayle before Ascension, was hanged for so grosse an error, in a matter of so greate importaunce.
- (r) Act. 5. 36. (r)
- (s) Li. 20. ca. 6. (s)
- (t) Paul Dial. lib. 22. (t)
- Pol. virg,

Bellantius the great Astrologer, which is sayde to haue giuen warning to Sauanorola, to beware of burning: was neyther able to foretell, nor to preuent his owne great peryll, in so playne a manner by the Starres, but that he was most beastly murdered, and Sauanorola lyke-

wise

*of supposed prophecies.*

wife himfelfe, whome many reuerenced as a Prophete, for the myſteries which he reuealed of the french Kinges comming into Italie, was burnt to aſhes, ſo was our holy mayde of Kent, the Prieſt that pretended to bring vp an Earle of Warwicke, while the right Earle in deede was in duraunce in the Tower, with a number more, inſomuch as it is harde to finde any one of theſe which haue ſitten, as the Prophete ſpeaketh, In Concilio ludentium, to haue made a quiet ende, or haue come die to theyr monument. Well maye they prune theyr feathers and perſwade themſelues, that theyr winges are made of golde, but experience dooth teach howe commonly they melt againſt the Sunne, lyke the winges of Icarus: wherefore, that ſtate and condition of the Church, was beſt regarded in the dayes of the Prophet Micheas, which was leaſt infected and peſtered with this helliſhe crew, euen as in our dayes they bothe lyue and die beſt, that haue leaſt to deale with them. They fiſhe in deede, but firſt it is in a muddie ſtreame, and then with a golden hooke for a whyting, ſo that theyr loſſe may fall out to be great, where as theyr gaine is friuolous: wherefore, ſince it is a wiſe mans parte, to keepe in minde the diſcourſes of men of account, and the wiſeſt man that euer was, excepting him that was bothe GOD and man, and the fountayne of true wiſedome, was not aſhamed, Exemplo deſciplinam diſcere, To take inſtructions and leſſons by example: ſince the deuyl is ſo miſcheuous by nature, and ſo greedy by deſire, as he wyll neuer ſerue our turnes, nor pleaſe our humours, without that tribute, Oculorum dextrorum, which was exacted by the tyrant Naas, that is, as I conſtrue it, of our right conceyte, and vnderſtanding in the lawes of God, we can reprooue none but our owne ſelues: if the lyttle ones wexe not more prouident and wiſe, by the puniſhment of the guiltie, let vs therefore ſeek to runne as farre from Babylon (that dallieth and ſporteth in this manner with the great Leviathan) as we can deuſe and aſſure our ſelues, that as ſoone as euer we are gryped in the deuyls pawes, or take earneſt at his hand, our God renounceth vs, and our names are rased out of the booke of lyfe for euer: Inimici enim crucis Chriſti, &c. For enimies they are to the croſſe of Chriſte, whoſe God is theyr bellye, whoſe ende is ſhame, and whoſe glorie tendeth to theyr owne deſtruction. For my part, I wiſhe with Veſpaſian, enacting lawes againſt the brybers of his Court, Vt fumo pereant qui fumum vendunt. That they which ſell ſmoake may periſhe and be ſmoothed therewith, and with Debora lykewiſe, that thine enimies may periſhe (O Lord) and thy freendes ſpreade ſooth theyr beames, lyke the Sunne at his fyrſt ryſing.

Ierc. 15. 17.

Eccle. 39. 2.

1. Reg. 11. 2.

Pro. 21. 11.

Philip. 3. 9.

Suet. in veſpas.

Iudg. 5. 23.

**T**He laſt reaſon wherevpon I preſume, to condemne theſe prophecies to the blacke deepes of hell, is taken from the difference which is betweene them and the prophecies of Scripture. For, where as the



## *A defensative against the poyson*

- latter are playne and open, to the iudgement and capacitie of the weaker sort, the false are darke ambiguous, & so flexible to senses, that are repugnant to themselves, as no man is able to distinguish a negative from an affirmatiue, but by the fancie of the paraphraste. The prophetic which God himselfe pronounced, that the seede of a woman should broose the Serpents head: againe, that in the seede of Abraham, all nations should be blessed, was so playne in forme, so sound in substance, and so certayne by euent, (as Iustinus Martyr proueth) that the stiffe-necked Iewes themselves, were constrained in a sort to acknowledge Christe, by the force of theyr owne endeour. How cleare the prophecies of Moses were, and howe orderly they tooke effect, after his owne decesse, appeareth in the storie. The lyght which Iacob gaue concerning natue, and engrafted properties in all the Tribes, from Iuda which prefigured the kingdome of our Sauour, in the maiestie of ciuill rule, to Benjamin: who beeing, *Lupus rapax, mane comedens prædam, & uespere diuidens spolia*, In the morning finding out his praye, and diuiding the spoiles at night: beares a figure of saint Paule, (as (a) Tertullian conceyues) who was first a raging persecutour, and after a religious professour of the trueth, appeareth in the sight of all the godlie, to be cleare and euident. The Prophete Esay setting forth the circumstances of that happy tyme, wherein the Sauour and redeemer of the world, should take our fleshe, giueth certayne knowledge long before, that a
- (a) *Gene. 48. 10.*
- (b) *Con. Marc. lib. 2.*
- (b) *Esa. 7. 14.*
- (c) *Esa. 9. 6.*
- (d) *Esa. 9. 2.*
- (e) *Esa. 57. 58.*
- (f) *Iere. 4. 20.*
- (g) *Iere. 31. 19.*
- (b) Virgin should bring forth a Sonne, howsoeuer the malignaunt Iewes, obscure and gelde the text: againe, of a braunche, which springing from the roote of Isaie, should stande for a signe to the people.
- (c) A lyttle one is borne vnto vs, sayth the Prophete, and a Sonne is giuen to vs principallitie dooth settle vpon his shoulder, and woonderfull shall his name be called: a Counsaylor, God, strong, the Father of the world to come, and the prince of peace, &c. and proceeding to the calling of the Gentyles, hee telleth, (d) *Populum qui ambulabat in tenebris, uidisse lucem magnam habitantibus in regione mortis, lucem ortam esse, &c.* Afterward he treateth of the Church, with lyke easinesse: so that the Iewes cannot be faued, nor excused with theyr exception of difficultie. The message, which he brought to (e) Ezechias, was no rydle, but conceyued in these playne and simple wordes: *Cras morieris*. To morrowe thou shalt dye for it, and as simple were his tydings of ad-iournement of lyfe, for the space of fiftene yeere: least otherwise the King might haue beene beguiled in his audite. Was euer any prophetic concerning Christe, delyuered in playner or more certayne termes, then this (f) *Dominus noster Christus, captus est in peccatis nostris, &c.* Our Lord Christe is entangled and taken in our sinnes, and vnder his shadowe shall we prosper among nations? And againe, (g) *Mittamus lignum in panem eius*, that is (sayth that learned father Augustine) *Crucem*

*of supposed prophecies.*

cem in corpus eius, the crosse vpon his body? He discovered to Passur  
 the wicked & vngodly Priest, the (h) certaine time, the meanes, the man- (h)  
 ner and continuance of troubles in the Church, with as many more Iere. 10.  
 particulars, as were set downe by (i) Ioseph, touching the great dearth in (i)  
 Egypt: and to cleare all doubts the better, promised vpon the word Gene. 41. 28  
 of God, that the sayde Priest before it were long, with his owne enu-  
 ious and malignaunt eyes should gaze and stare vpon the tragedie. Af-  
 terwarde when Ananias, in a brauery beganne to breake (k) the chayne, (k)  
 which Ieremie had put about his owne necke, to prefigure bondage &  
 captiuitie, (as (l) Agabus dealt after with his girdle to admonish Pauley Iere. 28.  
 supposing that he had beene no lesse able to encounter, and to wrestle  
 with the providence of God, then Iacob was with an Angell, &c. The (l)  
 Prophete foorthwith summoned, and charged him to answer for his A. 11. 22.  
 pride and mallice, in the presence of almightie God, and what fell out?  
 Were the summons like those old wiues tales, which are in vse with vs;  
 not so, but Mortuus est in anno illo, he was soūd dead in that very yeere,  
 to make good the prophetic. Againe, it was not possible to requyre a (m)  
 sayrer warning, then he gaue of the thraldome wherein Israel should Iere. 32. 4.  
 lyue, vnder the (m) yoke of the Chaldeis, if eyther the people had been  
 endewed with the grace of repentaunce, or the Priest inspyred with the (n)  
 gyft of interpretation. Ezechias foretelleth, that the Church should be Eze. 17. 25. 36  
 planted, In monte (n) sublimi, vpon an high hyll, that thee should be-  
 come a Cedar tree, of so great compasse and capacitie, as all the Ezech. 7. 26.  
 byrdes of heauen, should build theyr nestes, vnder the shaddowe of the (p)  
 same, and inhabite vnder it: he forewarneth in playne termes, that the Ezech. 9. 6.  
 (o) lawe should depart from the Priest, and aduise from the Elders, (q)  
 that onely they should be saued, which were sealed with the signe of (p) Eze. 34. 13.  
 Tan, of the rayling of (q) our Shepheard, which should seede his sheepe, (r)  
 and of one king to raigne and gouerne vniuersally. The Prophete Da- Eze. 37. 22.  
 niel may compare with any, for his plainesse in this matter, describing (f)  
 with a golden penne, the triumphe of our Lord and Sauiour, against Dan. 5. 12.  
 death and hell, by the merite of his suffering. Againe, howe mysticall (i)  
 fouer the dreames of Nabuchodonozor and Balthasar, were esteemed 1. Par. 17. 9.  
 by false prophetes, yet, he reuealed them by so straunge a gift, and in so 10. 11. 12.  
 rare a manner, as themselves (f) acknowledge, that he was prompted and (v)  
 enspired by the grace of God, & that none but only Daniel was apt or Psal. 21. 19.  
 able to wade in the depth of mysteries. The Prophete David descen- (x)  
 ded to the verie (r) pedegree, and lyneall descent of Christe: he spea- Psal. 21. 17.  
 keth of the (v) lotte, which were cast for his garmentes, of the (x) nay- (y)  
 ling of his most precious handes and feete vpon the crosse, of his (y) Psal. 15. 10.  
 descent to hell, and arysing from the dead, of the matching (z) humane (z)  
 nature with diuine, of the sitting on the ryght hand of his Father, of Psal. 84. 12.  
 iudging in the latter daye, that truth should spring from earth, &c. Psal. 84. 12.

The



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

The Prophet that gaue warnyng to king Benadad of the plagues at hande: describeth first the roote from whence they grewe, then the meanes whereby they shoulde happen, furthermore the certaine date of theyr euient, and last of all the circumstances of the personne, that shold haue to deale in them. I coulde runne ouer all the lesser Prophets, who by vertue of one spirite, deliuered out trueth with lyke simplicity, and furthermore according to the qualities of times, wherein they were imployed, admonished the Princes, priestes and subiects of the speede and measure of theyr punishmene, but because it would extende thys poynt to o farre, I wyll drawe somewhat neerer to the times, where in the fulnesse of saluation was expected by the godly. For after the retourne from Babilon, we finde the like course to haue bene holden, and obserued in deliuering of lawfull prophecies. It was reueled to Hircanus, being both a king and a prieste withall, at that very instant wherein he sacrificed vnto God, for the preseruatiō and sauegarde of hys sonne, in the brunt of battayle, that Antiochus the tyrant had receiued a foule ouerthrowe. The voyce was loude and audible, which cryed out in presence of a number, Migremus hinc, before the fall and ruine of Ierusalem, with diuers other of that kinde, recorded by the same author. Thus significantly and sensibly dealt Christ our sauour, weeping vpon Ierusalem a good while before, as if Titus had beene ready to surprise the towne; and assuring all the Iewes beside, that of all those stately gates and buildinges, one stone should not be left vpon an other. The like simplicity was vsed by Simeon, Anna, Zachary, Elizabeth, Agæbus, and the daughters of S. Philipp. Thus Constantine the first, and as I thinke it may be sayde without offence: the best Christian Emperour that euer was, (for in him and Helene, began first that prophecy of Esay to take place, *Et erunt reges nutritii tui et reginæ nutrices tuæ*) behelde the figure of the crosse, most plainly represented in the firmament, wyth these assured words of victory, to confirme him in the forwardnesse of fayth, *In hoc signo vinces*, in this signe thou shalt be sure to conquer. The writers of that golden age, being prouident & carefull, to preuent all scruples, that in tyme might creepe into the mindes of incredulous or misbeleeuing men, haue noted first the time wherein this sight appeared, which was not at midnight, when the deuill scattered abroad his teares, but at broade noone dayes, when the Sunne was in his maiesty. Then it appeareth that the man, who sawe this sight was both a member of the church, and a noble Emperour: from whose mouth the ciuill lawes esteeme it, a moste greivous crime to surmise a forgery. Thirdly to make the case more euident, because the Princes eyes, might otherwise be thought to dazel against the Sunne, it is sette downe that all the campe was witnesse of the sight aswell as hee. Beside we finde that this religious and zealous prince, was inspyred from aboue, wyth

Iosep. antiq.  
lib. 3. ca. 18

De bell. Iu.  
lib. 7. ca. 12

Esay. 49. 23.

Euse. de vita  
Constantin.  
lib. 1. cap. 22

## *of supposed prophecies.*

with the gyft of prophetic at other times, which is the spring of reuelations: and yet such was his modestie, as notwithstanding all these things, considering how many traynes and cunning shyftes the deuill vseth, to seduce the best he would ascribe no faith nor credite to the sight, before he was assured vppon conscience with the Priestes and Bishops, that this could be by none other, then *τοῦ τῆς νίκης τροπαίου* the monumēt of victory.

Thus must they deale that wyll winne credite to their wordes, for otherwise they shall finde none but fooles, that wyll be ledde away with toyes, more fitte to passe the tyme vppon a stage, then to persourne the trust and confidence of Oracles. The deuyl (a) scattered his rares, when the time was darke, & labourers were layd to sleepe: they that doo euyl (sayth S. Iohn (b) eschew the light. They loue to walke in (c) dark waies, vpon two which bad humour other accidents more hurtful then themselves depēd: the first, Nescire quō vadūt, not to know whether they go, the second, Ignorare vbi corruent, to be ignorāt when they shall stūble, *ἡ ὀψιμὴ δὲ τῆς νύκτος παρὰ τὴν ἡμέραν*, a theefe is alwaies boldest in the twilight, saith Creon in Euripides, and the reason is, (f) Quia iuuat credulitatē nox, & promptior inter tenebras affirmatio: because night helpeth lyghtnesse of beleefe, and men are boldest to affyrme when the candle is remoued. But the true GOD, opposing trueth against supposed Oracles, in this respect pronounceth by the Prophete, (g) Se in loco abdito loquutum esse nihil, That he spake nothing in a secrete place: Nec in loco terræ tenebroso, Nor in a darke vault vnder ground. I haue openlie spoken to the world (sayth our sauour Christe) I haue alwayes taught in the Synagogue and the Temple, whether all the Iewes resort together, and in secrete haue I spoken nothing. In lyke manner the blessed Apostle Saint Paule, prooueth that none of those things, which were eyther sayde or doone by Christe or his Apostles, could be secrete because they were not smothered in corners.

Indeede it is the manner of the wicked, alwayes to vaunt and bragge of theyr conceaied misteries: but what of that thinke they (as GOD sayth by Amos) to escape, by darknesse or horror of their denne It may not bee, for if they descend to hell, his hand is able speedily to dragge them thence: if they take the winges of the morning, and mount vppe to the clouds, he wyll plucke them downe, if they shrowde themselves in the skyrt of the mount Carmelus, he wyll put them off: if they diue or plunge into the bottome of the Sea, he wyll direct a Serpent, to torment and stinge them in the deepes: if they flie before the face of their enemies, he wyll appoint a sword to slaughter them, and to whatsoever course they bende themselves, with theyr endeuours, hee wyll fixe his eyes vpon them not for good but harme: for theyr conceytes are lyke the droppes of the morning dewe vppon the leaues, which fall not for the sonnes of men: but tarrie with a miste, and are dyed vppe with an

M n i.

exhala-

(a) Matth. 13. 25

(b) Iohn. 3. 20.

(c) Pro. 2. 13.

(d) Iohn. 12. 24.

(e) Pro. 4. 9.

(f) Cor. Tacit.

Annal. lib. 2

(g) Esai. 45. 19.

Esai. 45. 19.

Iohn. 18. 21.

A cts. 26. 26.

Amos. 9.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

- exhalation. *Quid apponetur tibi lingua dolosa sagittæ potentis, acutæ cum carbonibus de solatorijs*, the sharp arrowes of the mighty, with the coales of desolation. It is no doubt, that *Spiritus vertiginis*, that spirite of gyddinelle (as the Prophete termeth it) whereby wee learne so many windinges in and out, and all to this ende: cheefely, Vt in Domino præuaricemur, but when all is doone, that sentence of the Preacher wyll be found most true: *Qui sophiste loquitur odibilis est*, hee that speaketh sophistically is to be detested. Wee reade that Adam, fearing least the light would reueale his wickednesse, in giuing eare to the false Prophete, hyd himselfe in a corner of the garden, and durst not so much as present himselfe, in the sight or walke of him, that made all of nothing.
- Thus Saule, although he were a King, would not impart the secreete of consulting with the forceresse, to any more then two of his owne trustie seruants: Velleda the great Prophetesse of Germanie, would conferre with no man, that her maiestie might seeme the greater, vnto those that were not acquainted with her cunning. The Inglers haue no fancie, to playe one tricke oftentimes, for feare least that which causeth woonder at the first would make sport at the parting: Theodoret reportes that Leontius, *Doctrinam inuoluchris obtegit*, couered his doctrine with vayles, which some compared to rockes vnder water. The peeuishe heretiques at the first planting of the sayth (sayeth Eusebius) made small account, vppon what text of holy writte, but rather in what moode or figure they concluded all theyr blasphemies: which is all one with that which Iob calleth, *Sententias inuoluere sermonibus imperitis*, To wrappe and folde vp sentences in vt skylfull vtterance. This ambuiguitie of Oracles, was the cause why Plutarch thought that none, but such as were expert in Logicke, were fitte to prophecie, which prooues theyr arte, to consist and stand more vppon toyes then trueth, vppon cauilles then playne dealinges. To this effect, exclaymeth Cotta likewise, *O sancte Apollo, tuis oraculis chrisippus totum volumen impleuit, partim falsis, partim casu veris, patrim falso loquis & obscuris, vt interpretes egeat interprete, partim ambiguus, vt quæ ad dialecticum referenda sint, &c.* O holy Appollo, with thy Oracles hath Chrisippus freighted a full volume, whereof parte is altogether false (as I belecue) and some part true, but more by happe then cunning. Some are to be applyed and bent to what side we lyst, others so obscure and darke, as he that takes vpon him to interpret, standes in greater neede of an interpretour: and some are so doubtfull and ambiguous as cannot be found out, without the skyl & suttelties of Logicke. Wherevpon, I may conclude that no man, vnder the degree of a Maister of Arte, can either vnderstand or expound a Prophecie: Sceperus, a learned writer of our age, enquireth where a man might meete with one, that could giue any gesse.
- Psal. 120. 4.**
- Esai. 14. 14.**
- Eccle. 37. 27**
- Gene. 3. 8.**
- 1. Reg. 28. 8.**
- Tacit. An-  
nal. lib. 3.**
- Histo. lib 2.  
cap. 23.**
- Euseb. lib. 5.  
cap. vlt.**
- Iob. 38. 25**
- De diuin.  
lib. 2.**

*of supposed prophecies.*

gesse at thinges to come : nisi hoc ambiguum dubiumque , et quod in vtranque (a) partem referri posset, vnlesse it be so doubtfully as may be wrested to the prooffe of eyther side,, we reade in (b) Ireneus, that Basilides an hereticke in immitatio, as it seemes of Minos, Numa, Pompilius and the rest, disperfed his conceites and heresies abroade, Secretorum quorundam misteriorum simulatione, vnder the colour and pretence of certaine secrete misteries, Moreouer (c) Marcus the Magieian was wont to baptise In nomine ignoti omnium parentis, in the name of the vknowne father of all thinges , to whom the Painims built an aulter, longe before his dayes at Athens. All the Sibilles, dwelt in grottes and secrete places vnder grounde, beside, they kept theselues no closer while they were aliue, then theyr bookes were holden after they were deade. Nec ab vilo (e) praterquam a duumviris inspicere potuerunt , neyther might they be looked into by any , sauing the two chosen persons that were appoynted to that office.

The Coniurers of Persia, finding themselues so farre ouer matched, with the messengers of God in cleare and open light, deuised to admonish the king : not Viua voce, but by a certaine hollowe sounde, conueied into his priuie clossette, by a secrete trunke of sundry plages, and kyndes of punishments, which were like to fall vppon his house, in respect, he had too much depended and relied vppon the Christians, and theyr encouragements, but when the ginnes and vices of the Troyan horse, were layde open to the common viewe: the king himselfe according to the worthy president, of Cyrus his prediceffor in the same authority, gaue sentence against all the crewe, Vt decimarentur, that the tenth personne should be slaughtered. For, though the scales of Daniel were founde, there was a vault, and though the closset doore were shut, they founde a vent for theyr villany.

Theophilus the byshop of Alexandria, deseried the caues and holes, between an other Idole & the wall, wherein the priestes & prophets lurking, gaue out what aunswers serued fittest for their purpose. I speak not of the sacrifices to the mother of the Gods, & to Proserpina, the queene of hell, cleane vnder grounde : nor of the bloudy censure of the Turkes against all men that dare presume , to argue or dispute against theyr Alcharon, partly because, it is too base to abide the touch, partly, leaste as Lactantius conceiueth, in a case not much vnlyke : Susceptas publice religiones disputatio talis extingueret, such a disputation might happen to put out, and quenche a fourme and order of religion, publicquely established. But I wonder most, at the fond conceite of Iulian, the vile Apostata, which was Naturam auere in abstruso latere, that nature coueted to lurke in corners that were hidden , and that the diuine nature, would not suffer the knowledge of it selfe, to be driuen into the wicked and vnpure eares of men, with a simple kinde of vtteraunce. It seemes

M m.ii.

that

(a) Scepper.9.  
lib.3.  
(b) Cont. valeat  
lib.1.ca. 22.  
(c) Euse. lib.4  
cap.10.  
(d) Act.17 23.  
(e) Const. de  
falsa relig.  
lib.1.cap. 6.

Theod.li.5  
cap.22.

Dan.14. 21

De Orig er.  
non, cap.



## *A defensatine against the poyson*

Socr.lib.3.  
cap.9.

De diuin.  
lib 2.

August.  
epist. 43.

Mat. 6. 17.  
Mat. 6. 6.

Ad vx. lib. 1.

Mat. 18. 17.

Luk. 12. 4.

Heb. 12. 22.

Apoc. 12. 1.

Psal. 44. 15.

Cirillus  
Cont. Iul.

that Tully (though an infidell) was otherwise perswaded in this point, demanding *Hæc si deorum signa sunt*, cur essent obscura, howe it came to passe, that if these things must be taken, and accepted as signes sent from God, they were so darke, as if he should haue sayd, that eyther the Gods had in very deede, a meaning to reueale, them vnto men, in which case it was requisite to sute, and match them with our fraile capacity, or he meant it not all, and then our paines are idle. He proueth in an other place, that things which are obscure, want both grace and maiesty.

The peeuish heretickes themselves, discovered this masking vnder vailles, to be so fitte a shaddowe for abuse, as Maximus Maudarenfis, was not ashamed to obiekt against the Christians, (though most vntruely) that they had a proper and peculier God of theyr owne, *Ad quem in abdito videndum se componebant*, whom they prepared themselves, to beholde in secresey. I thinke the reason was, eyther because they shutte theyr chamber doores, when they gaue themselves to pray, as well to shunne the leuen of the Pharasies in bragging of theyr outward complements, of zeale and charity, as also to follow Christe, or els because for feare of persecution, they were enforced to assemble and communicate in corners: and besides at times vnseasonable, in regarde wherof Tertullian giues warning to his wife, to beware of matching with an infidell after his decease, because sayth he, if you rise vp to serue and honor God, he will grow ielous and mistrustfull, that eyther your life and conuersation, is not as it ought, or your exercises according to the rule, *Qui male agunt oderunt lucem*) are not to be iustified. Who hst to see more slaunders forged, and surmised vppon this ground, may read the same good father, in his gallant and most iust Apologie: for other wise, howe greate an ouersight had it beene in them, to lurke in angles without light, when theyr maister Christ himselfe, not onely wrought his miracles, and taught his Apostles, in the sayrest & most open light, promising that his gospel should be preached on the toppes of houses, but withall established his church, (wherunto we are comaunded to resort, both for sounde doctrine and lawful discipline.) vppon a hill, comparing it sometime to Sion, sometime to a woman clothed in the sun, sometime to the kings daughter, garnished with diuers colours, and to whatsoeuer els, hath eyther heygth or maiesty. But, as the principles whereuppon false Prophets builde, are couert, and the places where they dwell obscure: so likewise are the prophecies themselves, and not more perrillous in practise, then difficult in sence or vnderstanding. For, since all matters, which are onely sounded by coniecture, haue no certaine ground whereon to reeste. It is no meruaile (as S. Cirill writes) that the deuils finest practise hath euer beene, to conuey the poyson of hys dryft, within a clowde, of ambiguity. Thus, as the old Cocke crowes the

*of supposed prophecies.*

the younge reeordes, Sequuntur diabolus, qui sunt ex parte eius, they followe the deuill, that are of his bande, and as the Prophet speaketh, Sap. 2. 24. Sicut mater et filia, as the damme is, so likewise is the daughter. For though the wicked, tooke first very greate and violent exceptions, aswel to the Prophet Ezechiel, as afterwarde to Christ himselfe, for vsing parables, yet coulede they readily, and without any kinde of rysing in the stomacke, put ouer and digest the deuils sophistry: who lyke a wylde Foxe, makes diuers holes to his earth, for feare of being wayted for, or taken vnprovidid. I coulede let in an Ocean, of fitte examples, for the proouing of thys poynt, but because the volume swelleth, with the burden of it selfe, I will not charge it any further then is requisite. At such time as the Oracles of Apollo warned Cambyses, to beware of Smerdis, who sette lime-twigges for his crowne, the king forthwith supposing that his brother had beene meant, bereft him of his life, but after this an other Smerdis, who was nothing of the bloude, Quem fata in occulto referuabant, and whom the destinies concealed in the decke, accomplished the prophete. King Edward the fourth in England, faulty almost in the same degree, by practise against his brother, as the sequel proues but for reuerence vnto the man, in some respect already tolde, I wyll passe it ouer.

Ezcc. 16. 44

Hero. li. 3.

The Emperour Claudius, being priuily admonished to beware of Cassius, caused the gouernour of Asia, whose greatnesse as it seemes hee feared most to be made away, forgetting that one Cherea, one of the Tribunes of the campe, carryed the same name, who persourmed afterwarde, as much as was looked for. Iupiter intending to reuenge the wrong, which Agamemnon had doone, to Achilles, about his mistresse at the request of his mother, the Goddesse of the sea, conueyed a dreame to this effect into Agamemnons head, *ὅτι γὰρ καὶ εἰς πολὺν &c.* that if eue nowe he would giue an assaulte, he should surprise the citty. The warning was sent from the greatest God, and to the greatest prince, and yet if wee conceiue *τοῦ* according to the present tence, it was a lye, and put the kyng wyth all his armye in greate perill of theyr lyues, yf otherwise, as the Gramarians speake, Cum latitudine temporis, with large allowaunce and extent of time, it might be verified, (as indeede it was) full tenne yeeres after without any fauour, but disgrace, for the present.

The same Cambyfes (of whom I spake before) being aduised, to beware of a towne called Ecbatana, would neuer come at one of those which was in his owne dominions, but light by chaunce into another, where hys life ended. So dyed an Earle of Pembruch at Barwicke in Wales, when he was put in feare of Barwick on the border, and Edward the firste, at Brough vppon the sandes, when he douted Brough vppon Stanmore. The night before king Henry the fourth, meant to sette for-

M m. 3.

warde.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

ward to the holy lande, with an intent to declare his inwarde repentance, for the wrongs which he had doone at home, by warring against infidels: because it had beene tolde him that he shoulde die in Ierusalem, it was his fortune to fall sicke, and dye soone after in a chamber, bearing that name heere at Westminster.

Iosep. antiq.  
lib. 7. ca. 10.

Ioh. 8. 56.

Wolsey the Cardinall of Yorke, being giuen to vnderstande, that at Kingstone he shoulde ende, woulde alwayes rather ryde aboute, then passe through Kingston vppon Thames, though it were his ready waye from Asher to the Courte: but afterwarde, notwithstanding all thys dilligence, the man was committed by the kings expresse commaundement, to the charge of Sir. Anthony Kingston, to be conueyed wythall speede to the tower, if vppon discouragement, and want of heart he had not fallen into a burning feuer, vppon the way at Leicester, and there deceased. The Iewes vppon a certaine prophecy, that one should spryng out of that quarter, who shoulde be Monarke of the worlde, supposing that theyr cheines were almost lose, and theyr mis-fortunes drawinge to an ende, became so braue and gallaunt against Rome, without regarde of eyther lawes or magistrates, that as a country man of theyr owne reportes, *Ne aduersis quidem ad vera mutarentur*, they were not reformed and brought to trueth, no nor with aduersity, but whither thys were veresied in the Emperour Vespasian, who as Iosephus wrytes, *pruquam E Iudæorum finibus discederet, Cæsar designatus est*, was appoynted Emperour, before euer he departed out of Palestine, or rather in our Lord and Sauour Iesus Christ, the king of kinges, whose day Abraham behelde, *Et gauisus est*, and was gladde, albeit the stubborne Iewes refused, and cast off his gentle yoke: yet I am sure this ambiguity was one of the cheefest meanes, to bring on that mortall warre, which according to the words of Christ himselte, left not so much as one stone vppon another.

Theo. lib. 3.  
cap. 13.

In the time of valens, (the most wicked and blasphemous Emperour) some to sollace and delight themselues, with hope of chaunge, and others that were rich and happy, by the mallice of the time: beeing both desirous in one degree, though not with one humour, to knowe by wicked and forbidden artes, who shoulde succede, the deuill (as mine author wrytes) *Obscurum uti solet responsum dedit*, gaue an obscure answer, according to his wont, that the parties name of whom they were so curious to vnderstande, beganne with these foure letters, *θ ι ο σ*. Thys comfortable Oracle, hauing beene deliuered and conueyed ouer, from one freende to another by discourse: brake out at laste, and came to the princes eare, who musing and deliberating wyth himselte, a while vpon the point, procured the dispatch forthwith, and riddaunce of so many out of the way, as eyther in respect of honour, courage, witte, discontentment

*of supposed prophecies.*

tentment, or affinity with these foure letters, might by any possibillity, eyther put his personne or his state in hazarde. But the conclusion was that not Theodosius immediatly, at whom he shot without all ayme: but first Gratian, and afterwarde Theodosius atteyned to the gouernment. The Welshmen had a prophecy, that the roode of Daruell Gathre should sette fire on a Forrest, a thinge so farre from sence and probabilitye, as no man coulede conceiue what it should meane, till Cromwell meaning to make a scorne of superstition, caused the fire wherewith no forest stored with great trees, but a sily frier should be burnt, to be kindled with that image. So that in very deede a great man sprang out of Iudæa (but no Iewe) Theodosius succeeded Valens, but not immediatly, Daruell Gathern burned a frier but no Forrest, and the strumpet had a childe by one Eustathus, mary not the bishoppe, but the copper smyth.

Thus haue I made plaine, that it neyther standeth with the duetye of a Christian, which ought wholly to depende vpon the prouidence of God, nor with the iudgement of a godly wise man, that would willingly both thriue in this worlde, and liue in the worlde to come, nor wyth the profession of an honest man, that hateth couine and deceite, to seeke out any other prompter, then Veritatis spiritû, nor any other light then grace, nor any other meane the mercy, nor any other trade the singlenes for by the tree we may gesse at the fruite, and by the lips at the lettice.

Theod. li. r  
cap. 22.

**N**ow, whereas some may perhappes enquire, whither the armes of God be shortned, or his mercy towarde vs so much abated: as he neyther can, nor will inspire his prophets in these latter dayes, with so large a measure of his grace, as those that liued vnder the yoke and bondage of the lawe. To this I haue already made a full and perfect answer, wher I treated of the ceasing of that extraordinary gift, & therefore in this place wil say no more, but that considering it pleased Christ, not only to giue some Apostles, & some prophets, and other some euangelistes, others pastours & doctours, (a) to the consumation of the saints, vnto the worke of the ministry, vnto the edifying of the body of Christ vntill we meete all into the vnity of the faith, and knowledge of the son of God, into a perfect man, into the measure of the age of the fulnes of Christ. But withal to leaue the holy ghost, his deputy (as Tertullian (b) calleth him) (c) to direct vs into all trueth: & to continue with vs, not, for a month, but (d) for euer, we neede not thirst so greedily for like discoueries. Againe, we denye not, but that as the spirite (e) bloweth where he list, as the power of Christ is neither stinted, nor confined within boundes, so when it pleaseth him, he may raise vp a prophet that shall tell what is to come, but after such a manner, as he raised (f) Lazarus from death: mary notwithstanding since we shall be pestered, wyth false prophetes (as our sauour Christ warned vs) vnder the skynnes of (g) Lambes, that is the weede of plainnesse and simplicity, which inwardly are rauening and deuouring woolues.

(a)  
Eph. 4. 11.

(b)  
Tertul. con.  
Prax.

(c)  
Ioh. 16. 13.

(d)  
Mat 28. 20.

(e)  
Ioh. 3. 8.

(f)  
Ioh. 11. 44.

(g)  
Mat. 7. 15.

Since



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

- (h) Since there were false Prophetes, once among you (sayth saint Peter)  
 2. Pet. 2, 2. (h) Sicut & nunc, in vobis sunt magistri mendaces, euen as now ther are  
 (i) among you lying maisters, since as I prooued in another place, the de-  
 2. Cor. 11, 14. (i) uyll can trāsforme himselfe into (i) an Angel of lyght, not for any loue  
 (k) he beares to heauen, but to prepare a way to spoyle on earth: wee can-  
 1. Iohn. 3, 4. (k) not be to warie in distinguishing the ministers of lyght frō darknesse,  
 (l) trueth from errour, and lyes from prophecie. Saint Iohn aduisevth vs,  
 1. Co. 12, 10. (k) Probare spiritus, to trye spirits whether they be of God or not: and  
 (m) S. Paule, so much esteemes this gyft, (l) Discretionis spirituum, of discern-  
 2. Re. 16, 12. (m) ning spiritēs, as he matcheth it with that of working miracles, we reade  
 (n) that God (m) cōmaunded Semei to curse Dauid: againe (n) Prophetā-  
 Ezec. 14, 9. (n) cum errauerit & loquutus fuerit verbum, ego Dominus decepi illum,  
 (o) when the Prophet hath erred, & sayd the word (sayth God by Exechiel)  
 1 Reg. 22, 22. (o) I the Lord haue deceyued him. To lyke effect he warranted the course  
 (p) which the (o) lying spirit, meāt to take in abusing Achab, with his whole  
 2. Par. 32, 31. (p) consort of Prophetes, in those wordes, (o) Decipies & praualebis. The  
 (q) same God, gaue ouer Ezechias lykewise, Vt (p) tentaretur. Beside, in  
 Nahu 6, 13. (q) that short fourme of prayer which our sauour hath set downe for vs in  
 (r) the Gospell, our request is, that he (q) leade vs not into tentation, &c.  
 Deu. 13, 3. (r) Wherefore we are to note, out of a place in (r) Deuteronomy, that God  
 (s) permitteth vs to be tempted oftentimes, & that for sundry causes: first,  
 1. Cor. 11, 19. (s) vt palam fiat an diligamus, in toto corde, in tota anima nostra, that it  
 (t) may be manifest, whether we looue with all our heart, and with all our  
 1. Thes. 2, 9. (t) soule. And (to the same effect) saint Paule hath set it downe, that (s)  
 (v) heresies must be, that they which are approoued may be manifest, ano-  
 Tob. 2, 12. (v) ther reason is, Vt (t) iudicentur omnes, qui non crediderunt veritati,  
 (x) that all they may be iudged, which haue not giuen credite to the truth.  
 Laet. de Thyrdly, Vt (v) posteris detur exemplum patientiæ nostræ, that an ex-  
 Orig. err. (x) ample of our sufferance maye bee transported, and conueyed to those  
 lib. 20, 18. (y) that shall come after vs. Furthermore, that we may repayre more spee-  
 (y) dily to God, when the deuyll chaseth vs in most extremitie: and last of  
 Iudg. 14. (y) all, Vt (x) habeat alios quos puniat, alois quos honoret, that he maye  
 finde some to rewarde, and some to pnnishe. Wherevpon it is affirmed  
 in the (y) Iudges, that when Sampson went about to marrie with an  
 Infidell, Parentes nesciebant quod res a Domino fieret, & quæreret  
 occasiōē contra Philisthim: his parents vnderstood not that thing was  
 wrought by God, that by this meane he might picke a quarell against  
 Philisthim.

2. Thes. 2, 9. When some shall say that heere, and there is Christe, when Antichrist  
 himselfe shall come, according to the operation of Sathan, in all lying  
 signes and woonders, &c. When the dayes shall be so daungerous, as  
 faith cannot be found without some difficultie, and if those dayes were  
 not cutte off by mercie, the verie chosen and elect themselues, should  
 haue

## *of supposed prophecies.*

haue much a doo to shunne the trappe of guile, then may we count him happy by the voyce of Christe, that persisteth to the finall ende of all infirmitie. Fauos etiam vespæ faciant, the Wasps make comber as well as Bees: and by the text it selfe it maye be gathered, that deuylles of the myddle sort might be cast out in the name of Belzebub, whome God reserueth by his mercie, In deuorationem, cui vult et, quando vult, to be deuowred by whome, and when it pleaseth him. All these assaults are strong, but yet God is faithfull, who wyll not suffer vs to bee tryed and tempted aboue our ability: Omnia autem possumus, in eo qui nos confortat, but we maye doo all in him that comfortes vs. But, even as they which offered Sacrifice to fayned gods, with the sonde Arcadians, were transfourmed into one wilde beast or other: as they that tasted of that whorishe cuppe in the Reuelation, were consumed by the wrath of God, as Lottes wife, onely for looking backe, was turned into a stone of salte: as none that hauing set theyr handes once to the plowe, drawe back againe, are apte for the kingdome of God: so they that giue them selues from trueth to lyes, are ten tymes worse then eyther brute beasts or stones, and hatch more monsters in the church of Christe, then euer Poetes coulde deuise out of the crotchettes of theyr gyddie fancies. If then the deuil by this sleight, in changing & transfourming shapcs and colours, as without the grace of God he may deceyue the best: and God himselfe hath sometymes armed him for reproofe of our assured faith, which strue and skyrmishe, vnder the most royall ensigne of the crosse of Christe: wee must seeke out more certayne groundes of difference, betweene the Prophecies of G O D, and the deceytes of Sathan, if wee meane to be prepared against mischeefe, neyther is this matter difficult or hard, to those that labor in the word. For euē as God enflamed with a mercifull and tender care of our soules health, hath specified the marks whereby the false Apostles may be noted and distincted, from the Pastours of the Church. So maye we iudge of Prophetes, by the same, so often as it pleaseth him to rayse vp any, in an extraordinarie manner.

**F**irst, therefore I require that whosoever wyll be taken, and reputed as a lawfull Prophet, prooue his spirite to haue beene inspired from aboue: for, otherwise howe cunninglie soeuer it be vayed with a maske of guile, yet wyll it neyther carry weight nor colour with the godly. Of this minde was godly Ioseph, when he tolde the seruants of king Pharao, Dei esse interpretationem, that interpretation belonged vnto God: and so likewise was Daniel, referring all to God which foretellet things to come: Mihi quoque non in sapientia quæ est in me, plus quam in cunctis viuentibus sacramentum hoc reuelatum est, &c. For this mystere (sayth he) was not reuealed vnto mee, in respect of any greater wisdom, then is in other men, &c. By Iob we are assured,

N n.i,

Inspira-

Tertul. contra Marc.  
lib. 2.

Math. 9, 33.

4 Esdr. 5, 23.

2. Cor. 1, 18  
Phil. 4. 13.

Apoc. 17. 4.

Luke. 9, 62

Gen. 40, 8.

Dan. 2, 30.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

- Inspirationem omnipotentis, dare intelligentiam, that the inspiration of the almighty giueth vnderstanding: so that we may prescribe with Amos, Partem super quam non pluit Dominus arescere, That the parte dooth parch and wyther, vpon which God letteth fall no droppes of his fauour, Hoc primum intelligentes, &c. For, this must we first of al conceyue and vnderstand (sayth saint (a) Peter) that no prophecie of Scripture, is made by priuate interpretation. For, not by the wyll of man, was prophety brought at any time, but the holy men of God spake, inspired with the holy Ghost. The steppes of men are slypper, theyr conjectures darke, theyr opinion variable, and theyr iudgements bounded within lymittes: (b) Iamblicus in his Treatise, of the misteries of Egypt, utterly disprooueth theyr conceytes, which would haue drawne the gyft of prophecie, eyther from the lyght of nature, or from any other fountayne, sauing the meere grace of God, In quo omnis autoritatis præsaga vis consistit, in whome consisteth the prognosticating force of all auctoritie. So Christe gaue his Father thanks, for concealing (c) from the learned, what hee had reuealed vnto babes, and againe, hee chose (d) τα μυστα το κοσμου, the follies of the world, to confound the practise of the curious. If prophecie be supernaturall diuinitie, then can it not be taught by rule, Sed per principia diuinitus reuelata, but by principles reuealed by God onely. Therefore, Nabuchodonozor acknowledged the gyft of prophecie in Daniel, (e) Quia spiritus Domini in illo erat, the spirite of God was in him: and the wife of Balthasar, seeketh to withdraw her husband, from the frutlesse confidence, which he reposed in the foolish prophetes: that had lost the pole, by this playne demonstration deducted. From the cause efficient, that there was in Daniell, (f) Spiritus amplior & ostensio secretorum, a more plentifull and ample spirite, iogyned with discouerie of secretes. Not long before the tyme, that Saule was called and aduanced to the gouernement, he was aduertised by Samuel the Prophete, as it were for an earnest of Gods fauour toward him, that he should prophecie, but when Marie (g) Cum insilierit in te spiritus Domini, when the spirite of God hath inuaded thee, &c. Iosias is sayde to haue beene (h) Diuinitus directus: and without him, sayth Esay, we neyther knowe where to finde, Thesauros absconditos. vel arcana secretorum. Though Balack would giue me the house full of golde or siluer, sayth the prophete Balam, I can neyther (k) choppe nor chaunge the word of God, to speake more or lesse: and againe, (l) Nunquid potero loqui, &c? Can I speake or delyuer any other thing, then that which God hath put into my mouth, &c. Putas quoties fata aperienda sunt, (m) in nobis situm esse, &c. Thinke you sayth another Prophete in Iosephus, that so often as the destinies are to be reuealed; it consisteth in our wyll and power, to suppress or vtter what we lyst? Not so, Nam ipse spiritus oracula quæ vult, profess nobis
- Iohn. 3. 2.
- Amos. 4. 7.
- (a)
2. Pet. 1. 21.
- (b)
- Iamb. de  
myst. Aegpi.
- (c)
- Luke. 10. 21.
- (d)
1. Cor. 1. 27.
- (e)
- Dan. 4. 23.
- (f)
- Dan. 5. 12.
- (g)
1. Reg. 10. 6.
- (h)
- Eccle. 4. 93.
- (i)
- Esay. 45. 3.
- (k)
- Num. 22. 18
- (l)
- Num. 22. 38
- (m)
- Ioseph. An-  
tiquit. lib. 4  
cap. 6.

## of supposed prophesies.

his, nec scientibus nec cogitantibus, For the spirite himselfe giueth out, what Oracles it pleaseth him, when wee doo neyther vnderstand nor thinke of it. Cassandra, telleth in lyke manner, that when the spirite entereth into her minde, (n) λέγει το μίλλον τῆς μεμνημένης παρ' αὐτῆς, it causeth those, that are estranged from themselves, as it were by a kinde of traunce to prophetic. (o) Audiam quid loquatur in me Dominus, I wyll heare what God speaketh in mee, (sayth the Prophete Dauid) and so might he be bolde to doo, since Gods spirite spake bothe by his voice and penne: (p) Spiritus Domini loquutus est per me, & sermo eius per linguam meam, and againe, (q) Lingua mea calamus, velociter scriben- tis, My tongue is lyke the penne of a swift writer, &c. Bothe Manue and (r) his wife, were made acquainted with the secrete purpose of almighty G O D: but, from his owne mouth, and by the seruice of an Angell. Eliseus discovered the (s) inward thoughts of Gieze, and all the words which the King spake in his priuie (t) chamber: but by the grace of (v) dispensation, and therefore we maye note a great regard in Hely, to distinguish betweene reuelation and phantasie, when hee gaue aduise to Samuel (declaring what had chaunced him, before he were instructed in the word of God) to returne to (x) sleepe and not aunswere any more, tyll the voice had called him againe, supposing that a dreame would vanish, lyke a shaddowe of it selfe: but the voice of God would not giue ouer, tyll his holy wyll and pleasure were accomplished, (z) Sensus tuum quis sciet nisi dederis sapientiam & miseris spiritum in sanctum tuum de altissimis. Who shall attaine to thy sence, vnlesse thou giue wisdom, and sende downe the spirite from the highest. He giueth (a) Inspirationem & omnia: and the Preacher earnestly perswadeth vs, in no wise to set our hearts vpon a vision or prophetic, vnlesse it descend (b) Ab altissimo: the reason followes in saint Paule, (c) Quæ Dei sunt, nemo nouit nisi spiritus Dei, For these thinges that are of GOD, or belong to him, are not otherwise to be vnderstoode then by his spirite.

This warrant of Gods spirite, therefore is the cheefest and surest meane of distinguishing, betweene the false and true. but yet since that olde mounte-banke, of (d) Bethel, was not ashamed to pretende this warrant, when he went about to coufin & deceiue. (e) and the false Prophetes in the dayes of Ieremy, demaunded how the spirite of God could forsake them, &c. We must examine them by the word of God, as by the touch of truth: for if an Angel should preach any other faith or doctrine, then that which beganne first at (f) Ierusalem, and hath been since dispersed ouer all the world, let him be (g) Anathema, God is offended heauily with a mortall sinner, which abuserh his holy name, much more with a deceytfull Prophete, that dare carpe at his prerogatiue, and therefore let them vaunt of Ierusalem, the Arke, the Cherubin,

(n) Eurip. in Iphig.  
(o) Psal. 84. 4.  
(p) 2. Reg. 2. 23.  
(q) Psal. 44. 2.  
(r) Iudg. 13. 22.  
(s) 4. Reg. 5. 26.  
(t) 4. Reg. 6. 12.  
(v) Amos, 3. 7.  
(x) 1. Reg. 3. 9.  
(z) Sap. 7. 9.  
(a) Acts. 17. 26.  
(b) Eccle. 49. 3.  
(c) 1. Cor. 2. 11.

(d) 3. Reg. 13. 2.  
(e) Ioh. 3. 8.  
(f) Acts. 1. 8.  
(g) Gala. 1. 8.



## A defensatine against the poyson

the couenant, or of what they lyst, a protestation which is flatly repugnant to the deede or acte it selfe, auayleth not to strike of the fine or amercement, which is set vppon those malepart aspyring iackes, that couer lyes with hope, and hookees with honny. The reason why saynt Peter would not forsake, or leaue his maister for all the world, was because he had the (h) wordes of euerlasting lyfe, which are a lanterne to our steppes, a fountayne of true wisdom, a staffe of stedfast comfort, and an Oracle of certayntie.

The noble men of Thessalonica, for tryall of the soundnesse of that spyrite, wherewith the Disciples and Apostles taught, repayred to the text of holy writte.

(i) Scrutantes scripturas, an hæc ita se haberent, &c. Searching and examining the Scriptures, whether these things were indeede as they were tolde. And to this Oracle our Sauour, (k) sent the Scribes and Phariseis, who seemed to make doubt of his aucthoritie: For these are in deede, (l) Discretiores spirituum & intentionum cordis, (m) The discerners of our spirites, and of the purpose of our hart.

According to the Scriptures ryghtly vnderstoode, not onelye scruples were (n) decided, whyle the lawe bare all the stroke, but cases of our soules, shall be (o) determynd in the daye of iudgement. Shall the people sayth Esay, require a vision of theyr God, for the lyuing from the dead? Ad (p) legem magis & testimonium, quod si non dixerint iuxta verbum, hoc non erit eis matutina lux, Rather let them come to the lawe and the testimony: but if they speake not according to this worde, they shall not enioye the morning lyght, &c. And therefore, as we blame not Saule, for asking (q) counsaile of the Priestes and Prophets, to whom the gyft of sound interpretatiõ, was allotted and (r) assigned by the mercie of almightie God, that the people might haue euer an assured ground whereon to rest: and the (t) spirits of the Prophets, might be subiect to the same. So God hath rased him out of the booke of lyfe, for seeking (r) knowledge by the wicked spyrites, when the spyrite of his God had quite forsaken him. The prophet Dauid would not be beleued any further, touching the plot of that holy Temple, which his sonne should builde, then he could bring prooffe, (v) Omnia venisse scripta manu Domini ad se, vt intelligeret vniuersa opera exemplaris, that all thinges appertayning to the same, came to him written with the hand of God, that hee might vnderstand all the workes, of the paterne, Christe by the warrant of the word, approoued himselfe to haue been that very right and true Messias: whome bothe Abraham beheld in spyrite, with exceeding (x) ioy, and Dauid with great (y) satisfaction, and (z) Moses preached dayly in his ceremonies, wherevppon S. Paule dooth iustifie the doctrine, taught by the Disciples & Apostles, cheefely for this cause, that it was the (&) same which the Prophets had foretold; and Moses had prefigured, Moysen habent & prophetas, for they haue

Mosca

he comendacion  
of wordes

John. 6. 68.

*of supposed prophecies.*

Moses and the Prophets, said Abrahā to the glutton, that was plagued & tormēted in the gulfe of hell, to whome if they wyl giue no crēdit, nei-  
ther wil they to a mā that should arise from the (a) dead, &c. There may  
be, & I dout not but there are at this day, Sedechias great store, which  
deliuer rules by rote, and crie out, Viuit Dominus, hæc dicit Dominus,  
cum (b) Dominus non sit loquutus, thus sayth our Lord, when he spake  
it not. There may be forged visions, and reuelations, but they carrie  
not (c) Responſa Domini, the resolutions of God. The world maye  
runne of wheelles, but they are not those, of which Ezechiel the Prophet  
spake, In quibus (d) erat vitæ spiritus: there may be strong and migh-  
ty blastes to shake the rockes, and turne vp mountaynes from the bot-  
tome, but not in the (e) spirite of the God almighty. Diuerſe maye  
charte and bable, Fabulationes, olde wiues tales, (f) Sed non vt lex tua,  
but they are not lyke vnto thy lawe. Wherefore we maye finde plain-  
ly by Iosephus, that albeit the plagues, and myseries of the stubborne  
and styfnecked Iewes, were reuealed beforehande to theyr generall:  
yet so great care was taken in that wretched time, that the people might  
not be abused, or misledded by priuate fancies: wanting warrant, in the  
written wordes, that the story setteth downe withall, (g) Probe nouisse  
illum prophetarum libros, that hee was verie skilfull, or well learned in  
the bookes of the Prophetes. Dionisius (h) a godly Bishoppe, beeing  
warned in a vision not to bee too scrupulous, in forbearing to reade  
bookes of heretiques: considering hee myght as easilie finde matters  
there, wherby to confute themselves, as saint Paule dyd in Epimenides,  
Aratus, Menander, and which is more in the verye marble stones, to  
garnishe and set forth the spowſe of Christe: would not giue credite  
to the same, as comming from the spirite of God, although hee were  
bothe learned and able to discern, before hee had examined and proo-  
ued it, Voci Apostolicæ conuenientem, to be agreeable to the voice A-  
postolique, alluding eyther to that warrant, of making (i) prooſe of all  
things, so that we retayne no more then is religious and good: or to a-  
nother place where all things are sayd, to be (k) Munda mundis, that is,  
cleane to those that are cleane, or to the (l) sheete, let downe to Peter by  
fowre corners, shewing that nothing may be counted common or vn-  
cleane, which God hath purified. We know that no man can lay any o-  
ther (m) foundation, then that which is already layd for vs, which is Je-  
sus Christ, that we are built vpon the (n) Prophetes and Apostles, Christ  
being the corner stone, & that all knowledge, which hath no ground in  
him nor in his word: not onely puffeth vp, as S. Paule (o) declares, but  
banisheth for euer, frō the sight of him, who chose the meanes, which  
were accounted foolish in this world, & to the sight of flesh and bloud,  
to confound the wicked, in the pride of theyr presuming pollicie.

(a) Luke. 16. 21.

(b) Iere. 14. 14.

(c) Mich. 3. 6, 7.

(d) Ezec. 20.

(e) 3. Re. 13. 12.

(f) Psal. 119. 86.

(g) Ioseph. de  
bell. Iudg.  
lib. 3. chp. 14

(h) Dion. de  
Bap. vi citat.  
ab Eusebio,

(i) 1. Theſ. 5. 21

(k) Titus. 1. 15.

(l) Act. 10. 15.

(m) 1. Cor. 3. 11.

(n) Eph. 2. 20.

(o) 1. Cor. 8. 1.

Nn iii.

Who-



## A defenſatiue againſt the poſſon

- (p) Whoſoeuer therefore (p) murmureth, with Mary againſt Moſes, picketh  
 Num. 12. 2 quarrels (q) with Dathan and Abiron, againſt thoſe that are in office.  
 (q) to correct and puniſh ſinne, ſetteth vpp one alter againſt another, Præ-  
 Num. 16. 3 uariationis animo miſtruſteth God with Iſraell in the deſerte, maketh  
 (r) a horch (u) potch or a mingle mangle, betweene the lawfull and true  
 Iosu. 22. 22. ſeruice of God, and the blaſphemies of Idoles, with the prieſtes of Sama-  
 (s) ria, or demaundeth counſaile and aduiſe of Belzebub, the God of Acca-  
 Exo. 14. 12 ron with Ochozias, can neither be thought to be inſpired by the gyſt of  
 (t) God, eſteemed as a chriſtiā, regarded as an honeſt man, nor admired and  
 Exo. 14. 11 frequēted as a prophet: Wherefore, firſt wee muſt away with wicked Ada-  
 (u) mites, whoſe manner was, ſo often as they burned in vnlawfull or vn-  
 4. Reg. 4. 1. cleane deſire, to cry Spiritus in hanc concaluit, my ſpyrite waxeth whot,  
 (x) or is inflamed to thys woman, though ſhe were the wyfe of an other,  
 Æn. Silu. and therevppon to enioy and vſe her, as it were by warrant from the  
 hiſt. Bohem. court of heauen, ſo farre as the paſtor was enforced, to confirme, to ſeale  
 pag. 109. and ratiſie, the bargaine made betweene the parties, by that text in Ge-  
 (y) neſis, though wreſted like the deuils Scriptum eſt, (z) Encreaſe & mul-  
 Mat. 4. 4. 10 tiply, next a way with the moſt irregular, and lawfull Anna baptiſts; who  
 (z) neuer vouched other reaſon, for committing murder, whoredome, theft,  
 Gen. 1. 22. and whatſoeuer ſinne they were inclined moſt vnto, then the ſtirring &  
 (&) ſuggeſting of theyr owne diſhoneſt ſpyrite: when the moode enflamed  
 Steidan. in them, and laſt of all, away with all the fayned reuelations, and viſions of  
 hiſt. Roger Bacon, frier Hilton, Sauanorola, with the reſt of that vngodly  
 crewe: becauſe they dare not ſhewe theyr faces againſt the church of  
 Chriſt, which is Acies ordinata, an armie maſſhalled in order.
- Whatſoeuer credite they haue gotten (as Tertullian writes) in Caſtris  
 rebellium, vbi eſſe tantum promereri eſt, in the campe of rebles,  
 where a man which being and aſſiſting onely, may come forwarde and  
 atchieue great honour, yet they drawe no charter frō the written worde,  
 theyr geſſies are not warraunted by the holye ghoſte, they wreſt but  
 prooue not, they deceiue but teach not, and limme theyr letters ra-  
 ther with the watrith colours of abuſe, then with the laſting oyles, of  
 plaineneſſe and religious ſimplicity. I know that ſtraunge forwarnings  
 haue beene fathered vppon S. Bridgette, Abbot Ioachim and others of  
 the better ſorte, expreſſing with moſt bright and liuely colours, the  
 debate and diſcorde which hath beene paſſing whotte, in this vnhappye  
 age of ours, betweene Iacob and Eſau, and no furdre off, thou in the bow  
 els of Rebecca, but ſince we finde that (a) Dominus narrabit in ſcripturis  
 populorum &c. God will declare in the ſcriptures of his people, that  
 trueth ought to be reſounded from the toppes (b) of houſes: and that  
 ſuch toyes as theſe, which neyther were prefigured by Moſes & the Pro-  
 phets, nor are now comprised in the goſpel, nor approued by the church  
 of Chriſt, deſerue to be maſſhalled among thoſe fancies and Apocriſas,  
 which
- Tertul. de  
 præſcript  
 hæret.
- (a)  
 Pl. 84. 6.
- (b)  
 Luk. 12. 3.
- (c)

# of supposed prophecies.

which (c) Eustochium was taught to shunne, as the serpents egges, then regarded for theyr weyght, I thinke it safer to conceale the with a vaile of silence, then by example to let in a worlde of blasphemies. For otherwise this incōuenience must needs fall out, that as nothing is so foolishhe or ridiculous, but hath beene pleaded & defended by some one Philosopher or other, so nothing is so godlesse and erroneous, which may not be coloured with the varnishe of dissimulation. If now it be demaunded who shall expounde, interpret or apply the scriptures: for the fistinge of the spirites and theyr prophecies, in this case I answer, that none are so fitte, as the lawfull pastours of the Church: for that was the plaine meaning of saint Paule, when he resolved that the spirites of the Prophets, shoulde be (d) subiect to the Prophets, because our sauour was no God of discorde and dissention, but of peace and vnity.

Prouided alwayes, that these pastors be called orderly, as (e) Aron was, that they be not greased in the (f) hande as the Leuit of Michas, that they enter by the doore (g) and climbe not vpp another way, like a theefe and a robber: that they be as Apollo was, (h) Potentes in scripturis, mighty in the scriptures, able to exhorre (i) in sounde doctrine, and to conuince those that oppose theyr mallice against trueth: if otherwise, I may be bolde to saye with Martian the learned father, that it had beene better for the bishops, to haue thrust their hand into a bush of thornes, (k) then to haue layde them on the heads of such vnlearned ministers, as haue neyther skill to teache the simple, to restor the weake, nor to reduce the wandring. For if it were affirmed of the Iewish priest, who was but a figure (l) of that priest, by whom ours are authorised in the minestery of the trueth, that his lippes (m) shoulde keepe the lawe, and that we should require it at his handes, because he was a messenger of the God of hostes, if he were then made (n) iudge of plea and plea, and enfeoffed with so sure a promise, as (o) S. Augustine doth plainly teache, that though he liued ill, yet he coulde not teach amisse. Howe much rather may we warraunt and assure our selues, that lawfull pastors (p) orderly succeeding, in the ordinary function of the twelue Apostles, which were prefigured by the twelue tribes of Israel: to whom the sonne of God hath promised his grace and diuine assistance, so ofte as two (q) or three be gathered together in his name, wyth whom at his departure hence, he left not onely (r) keyes of discipline, but the myghty woorking of hys holy spyrite, with these heavenly propertyes to (s) sanctify, to suggest (t) vnto theyr mindes, and memories from time to time, what soeuer had beene cyther sayd or doone by him, to leade (u) them into all trueth, and remaine with them to the consumation of the worlde: and not with them alone, but with as many as shoulde (y) be inserted, and engrafted on the stocke of fayth, by the mynistry of theyr preaching, how much rather may we warraunt, and assure

Hieron.ad

Eustoc.

(d)

1. Cor. 14. 33.

(e)

Heb. 5. 4.

(f)

Iud. 17. 12

(g)

Ioh. 10. 13.

(h)

Act. 18. 24

(i)

Tit. 1. 9.

(k)

Soc. hist. lib.

5. cap 20.

(l)

Heb. 5. 1.

(m)

Mala. 2. 7.

(n)

Deu. 17. 10.

(o)

De doct.

Christi. lib.

4. cap. 27.

(p)

1. Tim. 4. 14

2. Tim. 1. 6.

(q)

Mat. 18. 2.

(r)

Ioh. 20. 23.

1. Cor. 5. 5.

(s)

Rom. 16. 15.

(t)

Ioh. 14. 26

(u)

Ioh. 16. 13.

(x)

Mar. 28. 20.

(y)

Ioh. 17. 10.

assure



## A defensative against the poyson

assure our selues I say, that these shall alwayes holde the skill of measuring, and peising doubts the depth of vnderstanding, and the meanes to make an ende of them.

These graces are as ringes, or pawnes and pledges of good wyll, betwene the church and Christ her spouse, not for one day but for all dayes, they can not corrupt and putrifie like puddles in the filthy cesterne of abuse: but renewe from time to time, and spring vppe to life euersing. The church of Christ shall neuer want true pastors to direct vs in to a godly course, although Miltiades obserued rightly, that vppon the death of Maximilla the wise woman, otherwise called the false prophesse: not one prophet could be found nor heard of, for the space of foureene yeeres together, among her foolish sectaries. For, as that graue and learned Doctor Gamaliel sayd in the counsaile openly, if the worke be of men it may be dissolued, but if it be of God it is indissoluble.

Euclib. 5.  
cap. 16.

Act. 13.

2 Re. 13, 18.

Mat. 4. 24.

10. 15. 29.

1er. 53.

Mat. 7. 19

Act. 27, 14.

H.B. 11. 33.

**T**Hus farre we finde, that reuelation and warrant by the worde of God, are notes whereby we may discerne, but yet because experience hath taught vs, that the false Prophet in Bethel, was not ashamed to pretende, that the worde of God, had bene reuealed to him, by an angell, which was false, & sathan likewise, to put in claime to the second note, by vouching text against the truth it selfe. We must not altogether stande vppon pretended colours, or vaine flourishies vppon the text: but trye them in an other poynt more effectually then eyther of both those, namely whither they professie a resolute, and constant fayth, in the blood & merites of our Lord & only sauior Christ Iesus, for no man (saith S. Iohn) can doo the workes of God, without beleefe in him whom he hath sent. Againe fayth is the perfect object, whych the lookes of God regarde, and therefore, whatsoeuer fable, fancie, figure or conceite springes not from thys sweete roote, is damnable.

The gift of miracles, was not common at the first beginning of the Church: to all that bare the name of Christe, by title rather then by troth, but to those onely that beleued in his death, and such a drugge true fayth is holden by the holy ghost, and of so rare account, as no greater weight hereof then one sily graine of musterd seede, is able to remouue a mountaine. Wherefore S. Paule repayed neyther to the pole, the Planettes, fixed starres, nor salt Sea Gods, vppon the wracke: but to thys certaine meane, affirming with a stedfast and inuincible beleefe, that all thinges shoulde succede and take effect in order, as they had bene reuealed in the vision. Fayth is the salt, which ought to season all our thoughts and deedes: it is the wedding garment, without which we can not enter to the feaste, and the marke which sequestereth the goates from the Lambes, and the chosen from the castawayes. By fayth not onely Sampson, Barac, David and the rest preuailed against mighty states, but

### *of supposed prophecies.*

but simple personnes, babes and women against Sathan and his ministers. If a prophet, which expoundeth dreames or geueth warning, of a thinge which after comes to passe: endeouour to withdrawe the people from the seruice of theyr God, wherein defecte of fayth and true beleefe is signified. Non audies verba prophetæ illius, thou shalt not heere (sayth God himselſe) the words of that Prophet. For euery spyrite that confesseth Iesus Christe, to haue come in the fleshe is of God, and and euery spirite that dissolueth Iesus, is of Antechrist. The wicked Arrians therefore, who tooke vpon them to deuine, what foule weather shoulde betide the church, were not capable of this gift: because they swarued from the sounde beleefe concerning Consubstantialitye, no more was Simon Magus, Theudas, Marcus the Magician, nor in our time the Anabaptists and Familistes of loue: howsoeuer some of them haue hunted most ambitiously, & eagerly to be reputed skilful in those matters.

Beside this principle is so certainly and infalibly true, as no Hereticke in these dayes (sayth S. Augustine) dares offer himselſe to the combat: Nisi nomine copertus Christiano, without being couered, at the leaste with the name or title of a Christian, and again Omnes Christum prædicant, sed qua fide et ore, ipsi rationem sunt reddituri: al preach Christ, but with what fayth or countenance, they shall one day giue account &c. He that is not with vs is against vs, and whosoever cleaueth not to Nazareth, must filch his prophecies from Iericho. Against thys principle, it may be that the rare example of the Sibilles, will be pressed and obiected by some busie bodies, which had rather cauill then conforme themselves to trueth, and with better collour by so much as Lactantius, Constantine, S. Ierome, Eusebius with some others haue affoorded them, the gyft of prophecy &c. For answer and dispatch wereof, I woulde be very loth to diminish, or detract from theyr discrete & bashfull virgins: the least part of praise or commendation, which hath been assigned, and allotted to them by the learned. But when I call to minde howe seldome one kinde of instaunce hath beene founde, against that ground of S. Paule, Fides per auditum, fayth comes by hearing, hearing by the worde of God &c.

It seemeth very straunge, that they which neuer heard the preacher, nor examined the word, shoulde not slightly touch, but plainly specify the misteries of our saluation. Again, it is most euident by Liuy, and by other writers and reporters of the state of Rome, that diuini factorum, which hauing charge to looke into the prophecies, were first sworn to report no more then trueth, brought out such warninges of erecting alters to false Gods, repaying idoles, yeelding sacrifice, with other execrable monuments of Atheisme and grosse idolatrie, as no wise man will indge, coulde yſewe from a person, or from diuers persons that

O o. j.

were

Deu. 13. 12

1. Ioh. 4. 3.

Aug. de. curio. quest. epist. 5, 6.

De Trin. li. 5

Lact. de. vera relig.

Euse. orat.

ad santos.

cap. 18.

Con. Iouin.

lib. 1.

Rom. 10. 17



### *A defensatiue against the poyson*

4. Re. 17. 33

Mat. 6. 24

Pro. 16. 4.

Nn 11. 21. 4.

were eyther guided, or inspired with diuine intelligence. For as lawfully in all respects might the priestes of Samaria, Deum colere, diis quoque suis seruire, iuxta consuetudinem gentium, de quibus translati fuerant, both worshippe the true God, and yet serue theyr false and feyned goddes, according to the manner of the nations, from which they were transported to Samaria, as well may we serue God and Mammon, and speake halfe Hebrew and halfe Ashdod, as blende the graces of the spirite, and the doctrine of Idolaters in one mass together. But since I find a sorte of godly verses, vouched out of theyr vessels, by the learned fathers of the church, which could not flowe from any wicked or vngodly sincke, I will forbear to iudge, or to except against the iudgement of antiquity, which hath waded in the cause before my time, supposing for an answer to the doubts and scruples which I put, that eyther the same maiestates of Rome, which caused the bookes that were founde in the monument of Numa Pompilius, to be wasted in a burning flame: because, they specified a certaine forme of religion and doctrine, greatly differing from that, which at the time of finding was in vse & exercise at Rome, inuented likewise sundry foyles and shaddowes of Idolatry, to make the directories sutable with the present state, or that they deuill cast these darke and mistie vapores, to obscure the light rather then condemne the women, whom diuerse doo helceue, and I dare not deny to haue been inspyred, wyth this gift aboue their equalles. But though we should admitte them for theyr priuiledge into the foremost rancke, what forceth this against my ground: for howsoeuer God himselfe Qui vniuersa operatus est per se impiu quoque ad diē malū, who hath wrought all thinges, even the wicked to theyr heavy day, except against the rule, or for the glory of his name extort the trueth out of their lips with hate and prosecute it to the death: this proueth not that we may dubbe or ordeine prophets when we list, of whatsoeuer sect, or limite rules which haue a generall extent, by presidents of perticuler consideration. The purposes of God are onely known and vnderstoode by him and therefore we must keepe the beaten cawsey, without tourning to one side or other.

It is most certaine that Pharaο, Abimelech, Nabuchodonosor, Baltasar, Herod, Sapores, Constans, Iulian, Valens, and the rest, had sometimes visions of terror and discouragement, sometime of grace & mercy to reclaime them frō their crooked wayes: but these can not avow these hell-houndes to be Prophets. It is well knowne that Socrates who spake and wrote so sweetely and diuinely, as Erasmus was about sometime to crye, Sancte Socrates ora pro me, was dayly wayted and attended on by a certaine spirite, which gaue warning of the priue snares, that were sette to catch and to entangle him. Balac, the wicked king of Moab was able to foretel: that the children of Israell should deuoure his

*of supposed prophecies.*

his subiects, Sicut bos solet herbas carpere, as an Oxe is wont to snatch vppe grasle, and Baalam being called foorth by the king of Moab onely to this ende, that he should accurse the saints of God, was so prompted and enstructed by the way, as he acknowliged theyr piety and godlinesse, wished that his life might ende, after the manner of those iuste men, adding further that Israell shoulde be raysted vppe, and encouraged like a Lyon, and neuer abandon or forsake the chafe, tyll they were glutted with the bloude and slaughter of theyr ennemies. If these examples be not thought sufficient to serue the tourne, whych no wise man wyll think, what can they say to Baalams asse, who plaid his part as throughly, in reproouing his maisters rash & vnaduised heate as any one, & yet I thinke it be as like, that God may extraordinarily worke in a man that wanteth sayth, as is in a beaste that is voide of reason. The Oxe knewe his owner, and the simple asse his maisters cribbe: but Israell knew not me, sayth the Lorde by the Prophet. The godlesse Madianites were inspired in a dreame, wyth the foresight of theyr owne mishap: & which may seeme moore straunge, though God alone illuminate our mindes as we learne by Daniell, yet theyr owne freendes in that verry instant, gaue a right and sounde interpretation.

Nu. 23. 24.

Esay. 1. 3.

Iud. 7. 13.

The forcerers and coniuers, which were in greatest credite with the wicked kinges: sometimes acknowledge gods holy finger, to haue wrought with Moses and the rest, as we haue heard before, sometyms confessed themselues, to be ouer-matched with a stronger arme, and yet they carry not the names of Prophets. Note further that the bloudy messengers, which were sent foorth by Saule to apprehend Dauid, were esprised on a suddayne with the spirits of the Prophets who they mette, and began foorthwith to prophecy. And Saule himselte, hauing the true seruants of God in chafe, was gladd to strippe himselte and prophetic among the rest. Wherevpon the prouerbe grewe, Nunquid et Saule inter prophetas, I coulde adioyne his last wordes touching Dauid: and not longe before his ende, Faciens faciet, et potens poterit, according to the sentence gyuen by S. Iohn Baptist of his Maister, to the Scribes and Pharises, Hunc oportet crescere, vos autem minui, this man must encrease, but you shall be taken downe, which differ little from the first in quality. Pilates wife was neither saint, nor (for any thinge I finde) of sounde beleefe, and yet she forbadde her husbände, as he sat in iudgement vpon the sight of a fearefull dreame, in no wise to embrew his handes wyth the guiltlesse bloude of our redeemer. With these it shall not be amisse to couple Caiphas in one lincke, who notwithstanding hee were a rancor and more professed ennemie to trueth, then any of the rest, yet in respect he was Illius anni Pontifex, the bishop or high priest for that yere, is affirmed by S. Iohn to prophecy, or if they tie thys priuiledge, rather to the chayre then to the personne, what can they pretende against the

1. Re. 19. 20.

1. Re. 19. 24

1. Re. 16. 17.

Ioh. 3. 30.

Mat. 27. 19

Ioh. 8. 4.



## *A defensatine against the poyson*

- Ioh. 7. 35. straung example of the Iewes, who gathered vpo these words of Christe (where I am you can not come) a certaine glimse or priuie light, of hys departure to the Gentiles.
- Sueton. in  
Vespasi. Vespasian without any kinde of charme, restored a blinde man to sight, if Suetonius may be beleued. Theorecnus erected an idole, Ioui *ϑαιου*, and wrought straunge thinges by Magicke. The Nouatian heretickes (as Theodoret reportes) were not altogether voyde of the gyft of miracles, no more was Iudas (as S. Ambrose writes) while he remayned in the felowshippe. For diuers cast out deuils in the name of Christ whom notwithstanding in the latter day, he will not acknowledge for his lawfull ministers. Wherefore as the sunne shineth equally both vpon the good and badde, so God imparteth gifts of nature equally to both, not as the signes of fauour to the wicked: but rather for a stronger charge vpon them, in respect of theyr vnthankfulnesse. I speake not of him that built his aultar *αυτου θεου* to the vnknownen God, nor of another prophet who was take vp in Thrace, during the raigne of Constantine the seconde, with this inscription vpon his monument, Christus nascetur ex virgine et credo in eum, Christ shall be borne of a virgine, and I beleue in him, and on the backe side was engrauen to answer, that Sub Irene et constantino me rursum videbit Sol, vnder the raigne of Irene and Constantine the sunne shall see me againe, which fell out accordingly, but I wyll cōclude this matter, wyth the true conceyte of Sozomen, that nothing fell out righter, for the certainty and euidence of trueth, then that it pleased God to quicken and inspyre the myndes, not of hys seruauents onely, but of aliens and straungers also.
- Euseb. lib. 9. cap. 2. with hys holy gyfts, not much vnlike a skilfull and expert Musitian. who deuifeth extraordinary strings, for the the playing of straung musique. For no man wyl suppose that eyther Socrates, or his *δαιμων*, Balac, Balaam, Baalams asse, the catch-poles of king Saule, or Saule himselfe. The Madianites, an Oxe, an asse, Iudas, Caiphas, the wife of Pilate, Valens, Herode, Iulian, with all the kennell of those hell-houndes, were such prophets, as Esay, Jeremy, Ezechiell, or such as godly persons ought to reuerence, although it pleased God sometime when sinners eyther wandered, or wept by the streames of Babilon, and hunge theyr harpes vpon the braunches of the Willowes. for the taking downe of presumptions crest, or trailing of the paynted plumes of glorye in the dust, or for a manifest and certaine prooffe &c. that grace is neyther, in the wyller nor in the runner: but in him that showeth mercy, or for some other secrete cause, reserued onely to the knowledge of hymselfe to worke as mightily by euery one of these and in as straung a manner as by the Sibilles or other Oracles. But cheefely let vs marke that place of S. Luke, where the wicked spirites which tooke knowledge, both of Christ and Paule, because they kept and helde one certaine course, refused afterwarde to stoope, or yelde one iote to the (a) sonnes of Sceua
- Mat. 7. 22.  
Mat. 5. 45
- Act. 17. 27.
- Zonar. An. tom. 3,
- Sozom. lib. 1. cap,
- (a)  
Acts. 19. 13.  
14, 15.
- the

## *of supposed prophecies.*

the Iewishe priest, adiuring them in the name of Christe, because they sayth was false and counterfeyte.

Furthermore, because many which professe Christe outwardlye, denie him in theyr hearts according to the sentence of the Prophete, (b) Populus hic labiis me honorat, cor autem eius longe est a me, and as our owne experience hath dayly prooued by the death of many, which although they lyue together with vs, in the bosome of our outwarde church, are notwithstanding made away: for witchcrafte, forcerye, and such lyke trumperies, by iustice of the lande, I ioygne to these another note, which is, that whosoever wyll auerre, and iustifie the course of his proceeding: eyther touching myracles, or prophecie, to be consonant to trueth, must only worke by Iesus Christ and in his holy name, without eyther sawce of Magicke, helpe of spyrite, or any mixture of impietynt, and most vnprofitable ceremonies. For, euen as Christe himselfe beeing planted and enstalled at the right hand of his Father, hath (c) subdued all things vnder his owne feete, so certaynlye there is none other name vnder heauen, whereby (d) we may be saued: nor, whereat the knees (e) of all thinges shall bowe, neyther is it possible for any man, to speake with the spirite of God, that sayth (f) Anathema to Iesus. The poore widdowe in Sarephta, forbare to acknowledge Elias to be the man of God: tyll shee had heard (g) the manner of his inuocation, touching her sonnes recouerie. Samuel reuealed vnto Saule, the deepest secretes of his heart, but not before the page were gone away, that he might declare vnto him, in lyke manner the (h) woord of God. The people would not permitte that Ionathas, should leese one heaire, (i) Quod cum Domino operatus esset: because hee wrought with God, &c. The voice of Esaye, Ieremy, Ezechiell, is alwayes, Hæc dicit Dominus: of Micheas, (k) Nos ambulauimus in nomine Domini nostri, we haue walked in the name of our Lord: of Agabus, Hæc dicit (l) spiritus sanctus, these thinges sayth the holy Ghost, &c. Christe cast out spirites, Verbo (m) with a word, that is, by adiuring them, not by Belzebug the prince of the deuilles, but in his owne aucthoritie: and againe, (n) Spiritu Dei, in Gods spirite. Peter had none other charme, then these playne and pithy words, Sanet te (o) Dominus Iesus, our Lord Iesus Christe restore thee: nor Paule, for the recouerie of Publius his Father, then the (p) laying on of his most blessed handes with inuocation. The seely captiue woman, in her cure of the King of Iberes chylde, vsed these wordes onely, (q) Christus qui multos seruaui, &c. Christe who hath preferued many, shall lykewise restore this infant. The diet which the Prophet Elizeus, prescribed vnto Naaman for preferuation of his health: was onely to serue God, and what the meanes of curing in those dayes were thought to be, appeareth by that Naaman, onely looked that Elizeus should first call (r) vppon the name

(b) Esai. 29. 13.  
Matth. 15, 8.

(c) Ephe. 1. 21.  
(d) Esai. 45. 23.  
Rom. 14. 11.

(e) Philp. 2. 10  
(f) 1. Cor. 12. 3.

(g) 3. Reg. 17. 21  
(h) 1. Reg. 2. 27.

(i) 1. Re. 14. 45  
(k) Mcih. 4. 5.

(l) Acts. 21. 11.  
(m) Matth. 8. 16.

(n) Matt. 12. 28.  
(o) Acts 9. 34.

(p) Acts. 28. 6.  
(q) Socr. lib. 1.

cap. 16.  
(r) 4. Reg. 5. 11. of prairie



*lyde healed by  
her hinge and  
raye.*

## A defensative against the payson

of G O D, after touch the place affected with his hand, and so dispatch him of his leprosie. (f) Maruthas healed a chylde, but howe: Vigilijs & precibus; with watching and prayer, according to the first (t) receyte which was deuised by his maister Christe, for the casting out of deuils Saint(v) Anthony, to keepe a patient of his owne in breath, whome he had discharged from an vnclane spirite, fyrst enioygned him in any wise, after solempne fasting to giue attendaunce on the sicke: because, distempers of the brayne were neuer better calmed and appeased, then by the workes of charitie: and saint Basill required none other complement at the hand of Valens, the persecuting Emperour: for the perfect restitution of his sonne to health, then that he would (x) beleue as he dyd. Whosoeuer therefore, seeketh meanes to conquere and subdue the mighty tyrants of this world, must not forget that Dauid, in the name of God without his complete armour, layde a Giaunt prostrate (a) in the field. If wee labour to worke myracles, that holie name called (b) fyre downe from heauen: if, to bee released from the burden of offences, Ananias aduised Paule to washe away his sinnes, by calling (c) on the name of God. By the vertue of his sacred name, the blinde see, the deafe heare, the lame recouer strength, and the dead are reuiued. These are the streames, which issue from the precious side of Christe, and the graces that flowe from his bosome, and runne downe the beard of Aaron, lyke the deawe of (d) Hermon, to the skyrte of his cloathing. (e) Arma nostra non sunt carnalia, &c. Our weapons are not carnall, but yet forcible to subuert all counsayles, that oppose or vaunt themselves against the knowledge of the God almighty. And therefore as S. Basill writes, Da fidem (f) rectam, media honesta, allowe mee but an vpryght & perfect faith honest meanes, and the rest wyl followe: Wherefore away with all wise menne and women, as fooles are woont to all them: which tye themselves so narrowlie to certayne rytes and ceemonies in prognosticating, De futuris contingentibus, and to certayne prescript fourmes of wordes in curing malladies, lyke Apes to clogges, as if the smallest syllable or letter be leste out, they can doo nothing. We reade in Cicero, that the guise and manner of such personnes, was in olde tyme, Excubare (g) in fanis, &c. to lye abroad and watch in Temples, and in consecrated groues, as if the places themselves had a more particular and vrgent force, to aduaunce and rayse the spyrite, to the height of contemplation. In lyke sort the Disciples of Marcus the Magician, (h) Nomina protulerunt Hebraica, quo initiatos maiore afficerent admiratione: brought ought Hebrew wordes, that they might affect theyr nouices with greater admyration. The Druides of Brittain, which inhabited (as some thinke) the Isle of Man, wrought woonders by theyr charmes of (i) sorcery. Cor. Tacitus maketh mention of a certayne captayne of a (k) bande, who was accused

(f)  
Socr. lib. 7.  
cap. 9

(t)  
Mark. 9. 29.

(v)  
Socr. lib. 4.  
cap. 18.

(x)  
Idem. lib. 4.  
cap. 21.

(a)  
1. Reg. 17. 50

(b)  
3. Reg. 18. 37

(c)  
Acts. 22. 16.

(d)  
Psal. 132. 3.

(e)  
2. Cor. 10. 45.

(f)  
Basill in  
Hexam.

(g)  
De diuin.  
lib. 2.

(h)  
Euseb. lib. 4  
cap. 10.

(i)  
Cesar. in  
Comment.

*blissing  
by prayer*

*lole a  
itye. 2  
recta  
a honesta*

*vachys.  
by plan  
by words  
by sorcery*

*of supposed prophecies.*

to haue practised by charme, against the lyfe of Tyberius: for, though the ciuill lawes (l) absolue all those, bothe from payne and fault, which vse the course of ordinary meanes, whereby it pleaseth God to declare his mighty power, whether they be gummes, stones, rootes, or myneralles, &c. So maye the Fathers notwithstanding, as they doo most bitterly reprove, (m) Ligaturas & remedia medicorum disciplinis, condemnata: Ligamentes and remedies condemned by the rules of Physicke, or giue out eyther figures or characters, to defend vs against this, or that inconueniēce. For if Chrysostom could not beare, with some that ware a scrip of S. Johns Gospell in theyr bosome, to some certayne ende: because although the deuyll ran away sometyme, it was but lyke a wylie Foxe, to call in greater store of company: by howe much lesse should we regard, such wordes or syllables, as neyther can bee countenanced with equall weight, nor with lyke aucthoritie. The ciuill lawe pincheth these persons neere to the quicke, by the name Magorum & Magicis carminibus assuetorum, of Magicians, and men inured to the charmes of Magicke: and all councelles as well generall as prouinciall, haue referred all these thinges to the storehouse of the deuyll. Such are the forcerers and witches now a dayes, which haue their sundry charmes for all diseases: one for the toothache, another for a madde dogge, &c. For, though madde beastes (as saynt Jerome writes) were sometymes cured, by Hilarion that godly man: yet neyther by this meane, nor in so fond a manner. In this case we must neuer yeeld, but wrestle against fleshe and bloud, against the rulars, of the world of darkenesse, against the spirytualles of wickednesse in celestiales. For what godly reason can any man alledge, why mother Ioane of Stowe, speaking these wordes, and neyther more nor lesse:

Our Lord was the fyrst man,  
that euer thorne prickt vpon:  
It neuer blysted nor it neuer belted,  
and I pray God, nor this not may.

Should cure eyther beastes, or men and women from diseases, for fyrst the matter of the charme is false: for as the Poetes write, Euridice the wyfe of Orpheus, dyed of a pricke with a thorne in her foote, or if this be false, it is not lyke in reason but the thornes and brambles which had neuer sproong, or beene at all without the faulte of Adam, should conuene so many thousand yeeres, as were betweene our Father Adam and our Saujour Christe, without any greefe or offence to any man, or if they dyd, it is a great deale more then mother Ioane can prooue, which neyther dare presume to take her knowledge by reuelation, nor is able to defend it by aucthority. The second parte of neuer blysting nor belting, maye no lesse be doubted of in perfect englishe, then in true diuinitie. I dare not charge her with a lye, because this circumstance

(k) Annal. lib. 6

(l) Leorum C. de Malef. et Matth.

(m) Origine in Iud. Ang. de doct. christ. lib. 2.

L. echi. C. de Mal. et Math.

Ephesi. 6. 12



## *A defensative against the poyson*

- cumstaunce of swelling, is not verbally expressed in the text : but since  
 the fleshe of Christe was passible by nature, and subiect to the paynes  
 and agonies of death by wyll, I finde no reason, but his body might as  
 well, (well as bleede, especially considering the same Prophete, vitereth  
 that we were healed with his blacke and blewe, which colour sildome  
 commeth, without swelling in the place affected. we know, that Christ  
 was perfect man in euery poynt, excepting onely sinne, and therefore  
 men had neede he warie, that they scant not any parcell of his suffering,  
 least they take as much from his merite. *Quanto enim plura, pro me  
 Christus passus est, tanto plus illi debeo:* for the more that Christe hath  
 suffered for mee (sayth saint Augustine) the more am I indebted to his  
 mercie.
- Thus much for the matter of the charme, as for the manner it  
 is altogether chyldishe and ridiculous, and so much the worse to  
 bee lyked: as it runnes in ryme, according to the course of Apollos  
 olde weather beaten Oracles. Besyde, whereas the iudgement of  
 this cause requyreth, *Sensus exercitatos ad discretionem boni & ma-  
 li,* senses well practised, to discerne betweene good and euyll, the wo-  
 man is so fonde and simple as shee speaketh, onely lyke a parrette, and  
 is not able to delyuer any reason of her dealing. One of the reysters  
 which serued vnder the Frenche Admirall, at the siege of Poictiers,  
 was founde after hee was dead, to haue about his necke a purse of  
 Taffata, and within the same a peece of parchment, full of charecters in  
 Hebrew: beside, many cyrcles, semicircles, tryangles, &c. with sundrie  
 shorte cuttes, and shreddings of the Psalmes, *Deus misereatur nostri,* &c  
*Angelis suis mādauit de te,* &c. *Super aspidem & Basiliscū,* &c. As if the  
 Prophecies which properly belong to Christe, might be wrested to the  
 safegard & defence of every priuate mā or men could draw defensatiues,  
 out of the drugges of that obscure philosophy, wherewith Cornelius  
 Agrippa, slubbered so many sheetes of paper to so lyttle purpose. But  
 some saye, that the wordes which our women vse, are not offenseiue: no  
 more are the names of Adonai, Iehoua, tetragrammaton, as the learned  
 vse them: but, as they are abused and corrupted by the coniuers. Ney-  
 ther are the Samaritanes reprooued, for the worship which they dyd to  
 GOD: but for that they matched it with honour of the fayned gods,  
 which were adored by the Gentyles. Saynt Iohn, ranne not out of the  
 baines, because they were a meane of strength, & comfort to the body:  
 but, because Cetinthus the peeuish heretique, gaue him cause to feare,  
 that the rooofe would come downe ouer him. Clistonius, one of the  
 cheefe diuines of Paris, in his tyme, mislyked not a certayne booke,  
 presented to him by a freend of his, because it conueyned many godlye  
 prayets vnto God, but forsomuch as they were enterlarded, with a mix-  
 ture of arte Magicall. The head of Danielles image was of beaten gold,  
 but

*of supposed prophecies.*

but the feete of yron. The wine which goeth downe the throte lyke honny, byteth at the last lyke an Adder. The cuppe was glorious, where in the strumpette dronke of all abomination: Vicina sunt vitia virtutibus, and vices border vppon vertues (sayth S. Ierome) as superstition vppon religion, prodigality vppon bounry, but vnder the greene grassie, sleepeyth a serpent. The deuill can trans- fourme himselfe into an angell, and it is no deinty with him to conceale his ougly feete, wyth the long robe of a Pharesie. If theyr meaning were but halfe so plaine as they pretende, why cleaue they more to ceremony then to substaunce, Cur verborum aucupia, et litterarum tendiculas consecretantur, why hunte they thus eagerly, for the snares of words and the sprindges of letterst why preferre they certaine prescript fourmes, deuised by themselves, before the course which was commended vnto vs by Christ, and obserued by his Apostles? what ayleth the that they can not sound distincte lye Shiboleth, or as S. Ierome writeth, of the Munckes of Palestine, what letteth them to vtter theyr owne meaning in our language. Such curiosity and streigning of courtesey about slight trifles: empties no simple, or plaine sayth in theyr exercise. No man drinketh, both sweete and bitter water out of one fountaine, no braunch beareth both grapes & thistles, *μυστος αγαθος λεγει το αγαθον τι κακοι κεραντες* & let no mā (saith Ignatius) be couited godly, that entermixeth any thing that is euil with that which is good &c. the reason is, because a litle leauen corrupteth al the past, one graine of Asa foetida marreth a perfume, and halfe of one dramme of Aconitum, is able to infect and taint a boxe full of restoratiues.

Chrisostome putting the case as fauourably for these charmers as he can deuise, concludeth with a perēptory censure, vpon all their sleights and trickes of of legier du maine: Etenim superstitiosa illa quæ ægrotis applicantur, etiam si mille modis philosophentur, qui ex illis quæstum faciunt, dicentes Deum inuocamus, et præterea nihil facimus, et quicquid eiusmodi prætendunt, vt christiana est anus et fidelis &c. Idolatriam tamen sapiunt, for all these superstitious royes, which are applyed to the sick, vnder coloure and pretence of cure, howsoeuer it lykes those that rayse a profite by the same, to discourse and flourish like Philosophers. A thousande wayes, saying we doo onely call vppon the name of God, and doo nothing els, or how soeuer they pretende, that the olde woman which applies the same, is a Christian, saythfull, and a well affected woman. Yet doo they smacke and sauor of Idolatry. Non potest enim homo christianus magicis carminibus vri, sed a seruo Christi potius anniliam debet petere. For a Christian (sayth S. Ierome) can not vse these charmes of Magicke, but ought rather to repayre to the seruants of Christ for remedy. We finde that Christe sayde often, Scriptum est, and so did the deuill once, wherfore in the mea-

Apo. 17. 4.

Iero. con. lucifer.

Hieron. ad D am

Ignat. ad Mariam.

Gal. 5. 9.

Christ. in col. 3. ho. 8

Hiero. in vita. Hilla.



### *A defensatiue against the poyson*

Euse. lib. 4  
cap. 4.

ning not the letter, the person not the pretence, the substance not the ceremony, the finall drift not the middle streines, the lawfulness of that which is donne, not the couetous desire, of that which some require & wish to be donne ought to be regarded. For euen as we say, that it is a matter of small weight, that the wordes themselues giue no kinde of offence, &c. So may we finde that a certaine magistrate and hys sonne Niceas, labored S. Policarpe, to conforme himselfe, to the Princes orders, in this manner, *Quid mali est dicere domine Cæsar, illi sacrificare, et sic tandem euadere*, what hurt is it to say, O Lord Cæsar, & then to sacrifice, and so to scape without all punishment. But God who parteth or deuideth his prerogatiue, with none woulde not so much as winke at this: and therefore, the good father was content to bee racked, and tormented in a thousand sortes, rather then he wold transgresse the least parte of his duety.

4. Rc. 17. 9

This is indeede the way, *Verbis non rectis irritandi dominum*, to prouoke the wrath of God with wordes that are not righe, in which respect, these persons must renounce formalities, and fall to that playne course of wordes: or in that sence which was obserued in the purest times, as *Sanctus te dominus Iesus*. And againe, in *Nomine Domini Iesu, surge et ambula &c.* or els this parciall adhearing to the formes of wordes and syllables, will alwayes giue a touch of the base alay, whereof the charmes and figures are compounded. But such sometime and so greate are sathans wiles, in supporting this sonde craft, which is indeede one of the strongest pillers of his seate, as fearing least it myght be some disgrace to him, that Salamon without his helpe or knowledge of his artes, shoulde winne the reputation of the wisest and discreetest man aliue, hath caused certaine of his schollers and disciples, to gyue out a foolish tale, that Salomon was author of the greatest parte of charmes, which are in practise at thys day: that at the least, one science myght be graffed on the stocke of trueth, and for the prooffe hereof, they vouch the credite of Iosephus, whervnto I answer, first, that this prescript forme, seemeth to haue beene referred by theyr author, not to any flourish or deuise of man, but to an extraordinary grace fro God himselfe, as that of Dauid, to kill Goliath wyth a sling, of Sampson to dispatch so many wyth the lawe bone of an asse, of young Toby to restore hys fathers sight by the lyuer of a fish, of S. Peter and S. Paule to cure men with theyr shaddowes, and handkerchefes &c. Which if they coulde aswell maintaine, by warraunt of the text, as they defende it, out of registers of olde wyues tales. I would subscribe to theyr *Probatum est*, according to the circumstances of the time, wherein the prooffe fell out, and accept it as I doo the rest with reuerence. Againe, vpon due tryall, and precise examination of the writers words, and cheefely by the straunge example of Eleazar (I finde) that greater  
virtue

*of supposed prophecies.*

vertue was ascribed to the knowledge & right vse of the simples, which were learnedlye compounded in the cure, then to the wordes which were adioyned for a ceremony. Tobias was entrusted by an Angell, howe to vse the gall and lyuer of the fishe, without any pre-script fourme of words. And Salomon, whome God enabled to dispute of all hearbes and plantes, from the Cedar trees in Libanus, to the Pellytorie roote, that grew out of the wall: beside, De iumentis volucibus reptilibus & piscibus, Was more lyke to put in practise what hee might auowe, then to deuise newe toyes, which no skylle can iustifie. Moreouer it appeareth, that the drugges of Salomon dyd euer good: which proues his arte, whereas the charmes, and indyrect attemptes of forcerers with vs, abuse more often, then theyr cunning serueth them to ease, or to diminishe payne, because the cunning of the deuyll is to driue men by extremities of anguyshe and distresse, eyther to dispayre or blasphemy. Iosephus addeth that these charmes (if wee maye call them so) were forcible against wicked spirites: whereas oures are for the most parte, eyther first deuised or compounded by theyr counsaile. Beside, before the bare and naked name of Salomon, maye seeme to countenaunce so vyle a misterie, we must be sure that he professed this, before his fall, and that it was rather an effect of knowledge, then a bud or braunche of incredulitie: for as I doubte not, but his Egyptian trull brought him diuerse sortes, of such lyke merchaundise out of Egypt: so this among the rest, might seeme to charge the sumpter horse. Last of all, I declared once before, and it is certaine, as the Rabbies of the Iewes themselves confesse, that many tales were foysted, into the Cabala before the tyme of Iosephus. And this not vnylike to creepe in with the rest, considering the Scriptures, which are so precise, particular, and curious, in rypping vp as well the faultes, as follies of this King: haue not so much as glaunced at this one, although for weight it ouer-match a number: I wyll not shewe what credite, any singular example can beare against a generall precept especially, not recommended as some others are of Rahab, Phinees, &c. because I knowe not any man so simple, but is able of himselfe to satisfie this argument.

**A** Man would thinke, that these two latter notes, that is, professing to beleue in Iesus Christe, and eyther diuining, or curing the diseased in his name, might teach vs to distinguish betweene Gabriell and Lucifer, betweene Esay and Sedechias, betweene Peter and Simon Magus, betweene a message of assurance, and a blast of error. But yet since Semeias the false prophete, was not ashamed to sende out his pamphlets, In (a) nomine Domini, since the false prophetes, in the dayes of Micheas, vaunted that God was in the (b) midst of them, since many as we reade in Zacharye, shall giue out (c) lyes in the name of God, and bothe, (d) Prophetares in nomine Domini, & eijcere daemonia,

Tob. 6. 6.

3. Re. 4. 33.

(a) Iere. 29. 25.

(b) Mich. 3. 8.

(c) Zach. 13. 3.

(d) Matt. 7. 22.



## *A defensatine against the poyson*

- both Prophecied and cast out deuilles in the name of God: whom notwithstanding he wyll not acknowledge for his owne in the latter daye.
- (e) Luke. 6. 44. Againe, since euerie tree must be discerned by the (e) fruites, and not euerie one that sayth, (f) Lord, Lord, but hee that dooth his Fathers wyll
- (f) Matth. 7. 21. which is in heauen, shall inherite it, wee must examine, sytte and trye them once againe, by this note, whether theyr lyues and conuersations be correspondent to theyr calling, which they would pretende: otherwise I see no cause, why not as well then as the false prophetes, of whose
- Acts. 20. 30. fraud and counterfeyt simplicities, S. Paule gaue warning to the Church at Ephesus, they should weare this paynted maske or vizarde, Vt adducant discipulos post se, that they maye carrie schollers and disciples after them. For as the Scribes and Phariseis meant neuer worse, nor spake further wide of any rule, then when they declined: the secōd nowne in Grammar, that is Magister in the preface. So Christe our Sauour, to settle vs from flyding into trappes of slypper guyle, hath sette downe principles, bothe what and howe to iudge: of those that tell vs, Christ is heere and there, which is by scāning of their liues. Beside, he wylleth vs, Operibus credere, to beleue his workes: and agayne, as it were for example sake, (a) not to beleue him further, then he dyd the workes of his Father. The spyrite of God, was neyther in the (b) mighty winde, that threwe downe bothe hylles and rockes: nor in the styrring, nor in the flame, but in Sibilo auræ tenui, in the gentle breath of ayre, according to that sentence of Iob, (c) Vocem auræ leuis audiui, I hearde the voyce, or sounde of a mylde and gentle ayre: the reason is because, (d) Deludet illusores, & mansuetis dabit gratiam, The scoffers he wyll delude, and giue grace to the meeke and courteous. (e) Quis miserebitur incantatori a serpente percussio, who wyll haue pittie and compassion, of an enchaunter that is stoong with a Serpent: for he that (f) toucheth pitch shall be defiled. They that are of the fleshe (g) sauour of thinges fleshlie, and they that are of the spyrite, of thinges spirituall, (h) Animalis homo, non precipit ea quæ sunt spiritus Dei: for a carnal mā hath no taste of those thinges, which belong to the spirite. New wine is (i) neuer put into foystie bottelles, new garmentes, are not clowted vppē with ragges: neither wyll true wisdomē, enter into mindes that are ouerflowne with wickednesse. The principle which was set downe by the blinde men in the Gospell: (k) Scimus quod peccatores Deus non audit, we knowe that God wyll heare no sinners, but those onely which heare him and obserue his wyll, maye giue a warning, how farre we maye wade, or proceede in iudgement of these matters. For as an Ospraye can not stare against the Sunne, nor a Buzzarde wyll be trayned to the feeld, nor a mastie brought to followe sent, nor a shepherds curie to raunge or hunt: no more is it possible for a wicked man to reach vnto the prouidence of God, or to attayne those extraordinarie fauours

*of supposed prophecies.*

fauours, which are inspyred to the godly: wherevppon it was not sayd by Dauid, without purpose, *Opus grande esse, (l) non enim homini acquiratur habitatio sed Deo*: that it is a peece of worke or weight and moment when a dwelling place, is not appropriate to man, but euen to God himselfe &c. for though the Prophet speaketh of the temple in Ierusalē, yet we may tourne the same with greater reason to our mindes, which are the temples of Gods holy spirite: as S. (m) Paule hath stilled them, *Habenti (n) enim dabitur &c.* for to him that hath a stocke of godlinesse already, more grace shall be giuen, whereas on the other side, *Auferetur ab impiis (o) lux sua*, that glims of light which they haue already, shall be taken from the wicked. This was the reason, why the Angell sayde to Esdras, that if he would (p) faste, weepe, and praye, seuen dayes together, he should vnderstand farre deeper mysteries, then euer he had heard before. (q) *Quæ enim de sursum est sapientia, &c.* for the wisdom which commeth from aboue, is full of compassion and good workes: as they that are most pure in heart, beholde God in his glorie. We knowe what Christe sayth, of the Angelles of young chyl- dren, which maye be extended to those that are lyke in godlynnesse: Cicerō discourseth out of Plato verie learnedlie, concerning our abilitie, to looke with iudgement into thinges to come, that when the baser parte of our mindes, wherein neither temperaunce nor wisdom, but luste and appetite beate sway, hath beene chafed and enflamed with excesse of diette, chollor, passion, or such lyke distempers, as obscure the lyght of nature, it bringes nothing foorth, but monsters and fantasti- eall conceites in sleepe. But when the pride of wanton apperite, is curbed and restrayned by the sharpe bytte of abstinence, and the spirite put in heart againe, by displacing of vniust desires: which from the first be- ginning, spurned and rebelled against GOD, when the vapours of ex- cesse and fursēte, haue beene slaked with the droppes of moderation: *Tunc visa occurrunt tranquilla, & veracia*, Then meete we, with those calme and certayne dreames, which giue ayme to fortune. Vppon this ground, we reade that many in the state of Lacedemon, not content nor fully satisfied, with their waking cares, would watch and lye abroade in the temple of Pasithea (as I sayd before) without the walles, that no de- lyght or fancies, might withdrawe theyr mindes, from the scope or obiect of diuinitie. Chrysostome, hating and detesting vtterlye the vaine presumption of that age, affyrmeth notwithstanding, that when men that otherwise liue well, dispose themselues to rest, hauing prayed and fasted a good whyle before, *Dulces somni, & visiones mirabiles*, sweete sleepes enslew, with visions that are woonderfull. Wherevnto Peter Martyr, giuing as it were a full consent, concludeth, that whoso- euer is not wholly sequestred, and retyred from the world, is most vn- apt and vnfitte to prophetic. Saint Augustine giues the reason, *Quia*

Pp.iii.

oratio

(l) 1. Par. 29. 1.

(m) 1. Cor. 6. 19.

(n) Matt. 4. 25.

(o) Iob. 38. 15.

(p) 4. Esd. 5. 13.

(q) Iaco. 3. 17.

(r) Matt. 18. 10.

In Acta. homil. 26.

In 3. Reg 13



## A defensatiue against the poysson

(2) (a) orationes debilitat, caligo et tumultus secularum actionum, because  
 Aug. epi. 80 the miste and tumult of affayres, and dealings of the worlde doth wea-  
 (b) ken and abate the force of prayer, and to the same effecte, is that of S.  
 2. Tim. 2. 4. Paule (b) No man being a soldier to God, entangleth himselfe wyth  
 secular businesse, that he may please him, to whom he hath appreo-  
 ued himselfe. &c.

The monasteries at the first beginning of the Church were freighted  
 full, wyth prophets of the lawfull kynde: and such as were indeede in-  
 spyrred from aboue, as appeareth by the speeches both of Isaac the munk  
 Julius Sabba, Simeon and diuers other of that sort, which went aboute  
 in sheepe skinnes, in Goates skinnes, needy, in distresse, afflicted, wan-  
 dryng in desertes, in mountaines and dennes, and in caues of the earth,  
 of whom the worlde was not worthy. We say not that euery soule, but  
 that Anima viri sancti, enunciat aliquando vera, the soule of a godly  
 man reuealeth oftentimes true thynges, and therefore, though many  
 standers by were well enclyned to the fayth, because there were deuout  
 men of euery nation, that is vnder heauen, yet the spirite rested onely  
 vppon those who from the time of Christ his ascending, had prepared  
 theyr religious and zealous mindes to lodge, and entertaine so diuine  
 a comforter.

The promise was to Saul, that he should not onely prophesye, but  
 beside Mutari in virum alium, be chaunged into an other kinde of  
 man. And God assureth vs by the Prophet Micheas, that his words shall  
 remayne with those. Qui gradiuntur recte, that walke vprightly. The  
 soyle is blessed by the mouth of God hymselfe, which soking vp the  
 comfortable deawe of grace, bryngeth forth neyther weedes nor  
 thornes, but Herbam opportunam, his a quibus colitur, sweete grasse  
 and seasonable vnto those by who it is mannured. A ction is the lyfe of  
 fayth (as heate of fire) and looke euen as the body wythers, without  
 the spirite, so dooth fayth wythout charity. God wyll not vouchsafe to  
 gyue aunswer to badde men, neyther is it possible for such to be made  
 acquainted with his secretes, as dwell not in hys fauoure. We must ther-  
 fore sift our Prophets, whether they call dayly vppon God, to directe  
 them in the course of trueth: whither they can franckly protest wyth  
 Samuel, that they haue robbed no man of his goods, or with S. Paule  
 that they haue abused and circumuented no man. Whither they bee  
 patterns of good workes, and presidents to the faythfull, both in worde  
 and deede, whither they denye themselves with all the vanities, and vn-  
 stable pleasures of the worlde, and whither they can iustifie themselves  
 before those that are abroad &c. for such were all the blessed Pro-  
 phets, whose surpassing vertues are emblasoned in the storye of the  
 scriptures.

Abraham is prayesd for entegryty of fayth, for pure loue to God, euen

*of supposed prophecies.*

to the sacrificing of hys sonne, for singlenesse of heart, for stedfast trust, for hospitality, for sufferance. Moses shyneth for his moonelesse zeale to trueth, and surpassing loue to the flooke of the faythfull, which appeareth notably by this one example that he was willing, rather to bee casted out of the booke of lyfe, then his country men should feele the stroke of Gods most greuous indignatiō. He was preserued in the streame by prouidence, warrated in al his messages by the voyce of heauen & assisted with the gift of miracles. Elias taught the people, whē the storme was at the worst, he multiplyed the charitable widdowes meale and oyle, raysed vppe an other widdowes sonne, confronted princes in a godly cause, destroyed the Balamites, caused two captaines wyth theyr bandes to be stricken deade from heauen, and at the time of his departure, with a clocke denided the waters. Samuel, was called first by a vision, afterwarde he denounced iudgement against all transgressors of the lawe: no man coulede appeach him of the smallest iniury, he frequented the dayly sacrifice, made no difference of personnes in any cause, and afterwarde by Gods greate mercy, was translated into the mount, that he might not see the plagues which were inflicted vppon the people.

Elizeus succeeded faithfully in the place of his predecessor, opposing himselfe with might and maine, against the professed ennemies of God he shooke the Idoles and hill altars, corrected the mallice of rancke poyson, cured Naaman of his leprosey, discovered the most secrete ambushes, that the king of Siria coulede deuise or plot in his priuy chamber, with many other workes of extraordinary grace, which prooueth from what spryng or fountaine he deriued his authority. The Prophet Esay, albeit he were royally descended, as diuers wryte, abandoned the wanton pleasures and delights of the courte, preferring thornes and crosses of the godly, before garlandes and entising fauours of the reprobate. He was euer at the Princes elbowe, to direct him in the way of trueth, brought him daily messages from the mouth of God, cured hys vicer, defended the Orphanes, and poore wyddowes, encouraged the faynthearted, made the sonne reuert tenne degrees, which it neuer dyd before nor euer since, and at the length became a Martir. Dauid was a man, selected according to the heart of God, for the mildenesse of his disposition, beside, his iustice and religion were so well accepted in the sight of God, as hys sonne was forborne the longer, notwithstanding his idolatry. The platforme of the Temple, was comitted to his keeping, by the hands of God himselfe, wyth every pinne and nayle that appertayned to the same, and as the woman tolde him, so was he in verye deede, Sapiens sicut angelus dei, discrete and wise like one of Gods angels.

Abdias (as S. Ierome thinkes) for rewarde of hys constant cleauing and adhering to the preachers of the promise, during the bloody rage  
of



## *A defensative against the poyson*

of Achab and Iesabell, was inspyred wyth the gift propheticall. Er ex-  
duce exercitus, sit dux ecclesie, and of a leader of an armie, became a  
guyde of the Church &c. Ionas was the sonne of the prophet as some  
thinke, whom the Prophet Elizeus called backe to lyfe, to showe that  
God woulde imploy and vse him in the greatest matters: no weather  
was too scalding for him in the seruice of hys God, he was deliuered by  
miracle, out of the belly of a mighty Whale, and preached afterwarde  
repentaunce, and contrition to Ninuie. Abias was admitted for his  
vertue, and esteemed for his counsaile. He knewe the wife of Ierobo-  
am, Suggestente spiritu, when she came disguised, and the cause of her  
comming before conference. Abacuck was snatched vppe by an angell  
for the releefe of Daniell, and as S. Ierome wrytes, Quasi propheta lo-  
quitur, quæ futura videt: speaketh like a Prophet, those things which  
hee sees shall follow. The Prophet Zacharie (I meane) the husbnde of  
Elezabeth, Incedebat in omnibus mandatis, walked in all the comman-  
dements, Anna the blessed widdow that prophesied of Christ, persisted  
many yeeres together day and night in prayer and fasting, without de-  
parting from the temple. S. Philippes daughters, were inspyred wyth  
the like gift, and (as Eusebius reports) renouncing all vaine pleasures  
of the worlde, remayned vergins whyle they lyued. Cornelius, whom  
the angel vouchsafed to visite, feared God wyth all his house, gaue ex-  
ceeding greate almes to the poore and needy, and persisted in prayer  
The greatest parte of those, which had the gift of Prophecy, after the  
time of the Apostles: bare aboute the markes of our Lorde and Sau-  
our Iesus Christ in theyr bodyes. Policarpus, the sweete Martir of our  
Lorde, had a certaine dreame or vision not long before his ende, that  
hys bolster fell on fire, which myght eyther signifie & prefigure death  
or constancie, for suffering the soft pillowes to be burnt, which the wic-  
ked (as the Prophet sayes) that they may sincke, more easile and deepe-  
ly into sinne, sowe to theyr elbowes. But note that first this vision came  
after fasting, and continuall groines and prayers, powred out both day  
and night, then that the same was presented to a personne of such truth  
as neuer spake any thing, which came not foorthwith to passe, & lastly  
that he sealed his report, with the stampe of Marterdome. Potamiena  
gaue a certaine watch worde to Basilides, one of his cheefest tormen-  
tors: that ere it were long, by Gods greate mercy and vppon his ear-  
nest sute, he should be reconed and admitted into grace (as in deede hee  
was) but thys virgine, was a mirror of true chastity, and neuer spake  
worde in thys kinde, tyll the very poynt and moment of her disbluti-  
on (as Steuen sawe the heavens open) In like manner God revealed vn-  
to Constantine, by speciall grace, sundry attemptis, and enterpryses of  
hys enemies, before euer they were sette in hand, but we must remem-  
ber, that he was the first Emperour, that resolutely and thoroughly pro-  
fessed

### *of supposed prophecies.*

fessed Christe, planted trueth in the garden of securitie, weeded vp all lyes and heresies euen by the very rootes, encouraged the godly, punished the wicked, helde the Church in peace, heaped fauours of beneuolence and bountie, vpon the golden Bishoppes of that age, cutte shorte theyr enimies, and at the last departure out of this lyfe, gaue vppe the ghost in such a mylde and quiet sorte, Vt non mori prudentibus: that to the wise, hee seemed not to dye, but to exchange a corruptible lyfe, with an euerlasting garlande.

Iohn, the Moonke of Egypt, who gaue forewarning and intelligence to Theodosius, of all his ouerthwartes, Et sciscitantibus multis, res futuras prædixit: and foretolde to many that enquired things that should come to passe, was a man of peerelesse vertue (as the stories write) sequestred from pleasures of the world, spending his whole tyme in contemplation. Serapion was able to reporte, the coming of a speedy messenger, that brought the sacrament, whome no man that was in the chamber sawe, but this was after long and heauye penance doone for sacrificing before Idols. Saint Augustines mother, (as himselfe reportes) after a lyfe, ledde many yeeres, in a woonderfull precise and streight degree, receyued comfort in her sleepe, that her sonne should be conuerted: wherefore, that principle can neuer fayle, that albeit artes, and faculties which are taught by men, maye encrease by exercise, yet other graces, that proceed from God, are multiplied by mercie, and none are capable of such, saue those that apply the vertue of their mindes, to looke vpon the beames by which they were illumy-  
nate.

I could producke a golden number of such prophetes, as it pleased God, bothe for aduancement of his trueth, and reproofe of sinne, to rayse vp in all ages: but it may suffice, that all of them were famous in the world, for theyr puritie of lyfe, and theyr dealings futable in all degrees, to theyr function. With the wicked prophets it fareth otherwise, for if we lyst to scan the forme and manner, of theyr liues and dealings among men, shal finde, that howsoeuer some of them can shadow their dishonesty with greater sleight then the rest, yet all of them are in effect, as farre from godlynesse, as those other were from errour and iniquitie. Euen one of those Sibillas, which are so much spoken of, confessed in playne termes, then by the folly of her parentes, shee was deuoted to such a kinde of trade, as berefte all modest mindes of shame, and of it selfe was altogether voide of common honestie. A certayne zealous personne, hauing a good wyll to deuide chaffe from corne, by that assured principle of Christe, whosoever wyll lyue godly in Iesus Christe, must suffer persecution, &c. Demanded of Maximilla, (the false Prophetesse) in the first age of the Church: besides of men, which were brought vp and instructed in the schoole of Montanus, and lyke-

Q. q. i. wise

De vita  
constant.  
lib. 3. cap. 45

Theodo.  
lib. 5. cap. 4.

Euseb. lib. 8.  
cap. 36.  
Confessi.  
lib. 6. cap. 13.

Hilar. de  
Trinit. lib. 2.

Socra. lib. 4.  
cap. 18.

Euseb. de  
vita constāt.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

wife of the women, which beganne to chatte without all moderation.  
 Idem. lib. 5. cap. 5. *Ecquis optimorum, &c.* Whether any of those honest folkes, were euer  
 persecuted for the trueth, by the Iewes or Infidelles: *Nemo certe* (no  
 truly (sayth he) not one of them. They rather hanged, drowned, and  
 made away themselues, most lyke to those Circumcellions, against  
 whome Saint Augustine vndertooke to write, proouing that not the  
 manner of the death, but the goodnesse of the cause, giues the crowne  
 of Martyrdome. Againe, in disgrace of such badde Prophets, as with  
 their olde wiues tales (as saint Paule hath tearmed them) disturbed, and  
 disordered the peace and quiet of the Church. Apollonius, a learned  
 writer setteth downe, that Montanus, was a great procurer of diuorces,  
 an abolisher of olde fastes, prescribed by the Church, and a setter vp of  
 newe, an exactor of coyne, a taker of bribes for offerings: adding fur-  
 ther, that women were no sooner inspyred with his spirite, but forth-  
 with they ranne away from their husbandes, and (as S. Ierome writes)  
 A.D. Gerōt *Deserunt viros Helenæ sequuntur Alexandres*, these Helenes forsake  
 their owne good men, and runne after Alexandres, a meete lyuerie for  
 so badde an occupation. Dyd euer Olda the Prophetesse, the blessed  
 virgin Elyzabeth, or saint Phillips daughters, paynt their faces, colour  
 their heaires, weare garish apparell, practise vsurie, or play at the tables.  
 All these good thinges, could Maximilla doo, beside, fathering a falsie  
 commaundement, vpon our Sauour Christe, as if he had inhibited his  
 Apostles, for the space of twelue yeeres after his ascending vp, to depart  
 from Ierusalem.

The blinde prophetes of Egypt, which enduced Valerian, to perse-  
 cute and afflict the Church of GOD, fell to the sacrificing of young  
 boyes: *Et profundas exercuere prastigias*, and practised a straunge  
 kinde of sutteltie or coniuring. The Bishoppes of great Brittain, ob-  
 serued Augustines demeanure, with great aduisement: and cheefelie,  
 whether at their first approching to his presence, hee were mylde and  
 gentle lyke a Lambe, or raging lyke a Woolfe or Tyger, for by the  
 fruite, bothe men in generall, and Prophetes ought to bee discerned.  
 Beda in Histor. Abbot Ioachim, of whome some made a woonderfull account (and I  
 Melchior. can. lib. 12. esteeme) to be the best learned of that crewe, was woorthily reprooued  
 pag 722. for his errour, vpon that place of saint Iohn: *Ego et pater vnum sumus*,  
 as if it ought rather to be vnderstoode of vnitie, then substance. And  
 Sauanorol beside his businesse, in practising against the state, beyond  
 the warrant of a Preacher: perswaded a young Frier, who for the iusti-  
 fication of his maisters doctrine, was wylling to committe his body to  
 the burning flame, to take the Sacrament in his bosome. I neuer heard  
 of any of these aymers and diuiners, *De futuris contingentibus*, but  
 had his errour, if a man would hunt for it: for though they worke ac-  
 cording to the Serpents guyle, yet they want the Dooues simplicitie.

By

### *of supposed prophecies.*

By this we learne, that though the name of Christe, be ryfe in diuerse of theyr mouthes, because (as saint Augustine writes) no man dares ende- uour, to abuse in these dayes, *Nisi nomine coopertus christiano*, vnlesse he be couered and vayled at the least, with the tytle of a christian : yet when they lyue not as they teach, that maxime of the ciuill lawes, must of force take place, *Protestationem actui, contrariam non releuare.*

**F**Vrthermore, we must obserue, that as the fayth of holy Prophetes was more strong, theyr conuersation more honest, and theyr words more playne, then those of the false : so was the manner of theyr dealinges, farre more bolde and confident. They neuer shruncke out of the beate way, for feare of any storme, they regarded neither blast, nor thunderbolte of penall lawes : but alwayes set theyr faces, with a gal- lant courage against sinne, esteeming lyttle with what rigour, or ex- tremitie they were intreated at the handes of mortall Kinges, so long as the message with which they were cheefely put in trust, were presen- ted as it ought to be. Moses was not afrayde to delyuer his opinion in bolde wordes, so often as it pleased G O D to employe, or vse him in that charge. Samuell forbare not to recount to Saule, the sharpest ty- dinges that could come, which were that the kingdome should be rent and torne away, bothe from him and his off-spring. Elias, pronoun- ed to the face of Achab, that onely hee and his house, disturbed the peace of Israell : in respect whereof, not one of them should be lefte, to pyssle against a wall, much lesse, to swaye the Scepter of imperiall auctoritie. Iehu, reprooued Baasa to the teeth, though by this meane of a Prophet, he became a Martyr. Elias, openly professed himselfe to be the onely Prophet, whome it pleased God to reserue, for the ministerie of his Church in Israell : and againe, hee was desyrous that Naaman should repayre to him, for cure of his disease, that all the world maye see, what slender force the deuyll, or his kinde haue had to roote vppe true Prophecie. Thus dealt Nathan with Dauid, Esay with Ezechias, Jeremy with Sedechias, Saint Iohn the Baptiste with Herode, Christe with Pylate, Paule with Agrippa, Isaac with Iulian, Chrysostome with Eudoxia, Symeon with Valerius, Iohn with Theodisius : and the rest of this good sorte, according to the circumstance of the tymes, and personnes, where they ledde theyr lyues and tooke charge, bothe helde a stedfast conscience to G O D, and lefte a good report among the people. The fourmer worde of saynt Peter, wyll sende out beames from vnderneath a bushell, and giue lyght in the darke, which proper- tie encouraged that woorthy Appollonius, to sende out challenges, to all false prophets, wheresoeuer they were bredde, that eyther durst pre- sume to trust themselves, or would haue credite in the world, Vt venirent

Exo. 5. 1.

1. Re. 15. 28.

3. Re. 18. 18.

3. Reg. 16. 2.

3. Re. 18. 23.

4. Reg. 18. 4.

2. Cor. 4. 2.

1. Tim. 3. 7.

2. Cor. 8. 21.

2. Pct. 2. 19.

Euseb lib. 5.

cap. 17.

Q. ij.

in



## *A defensatine against the poyson*

**Rom. 10. 10** in quæstionem iudiciumque subirent, that they woulde not sticke to come to tryall, and to stand to iudgement, for as trueth shrinketh into no corners, so commonly, *Qui male agunt oderunt lucem*, and though it be required of vs to beleue to rightwisenes, yet must we professe also to saluation.

The Prophets which were before thee and me (sayth Jeremy to Ananias) were wont to prophecy ouer many landes, and ouer many kyngdomes, of warre, affliction, hunger &c. God spake the wordes (sayth Amos) *et quis non prophetabit*, and who will not prophecy? wee may descrie a notable example, of thys strict conformity, out of the Prophet Baalam, who would not vtter one worde more or lesse, then God commaunded him. Againe, it is affirmed in the booke of reuelation, that if any man should enterpryse to deminish any parcell of that booke of prophecy, hys name should be remooued out of the booke of lyfe for euer. S. Steuen, demaunded of the Iewes, which of the Prophets was not had in chafe, from the bloud of harmelesse Abel, to the murder of the sonne of Barachias, whom they slewe betweene the temple and the altar, and all thys came of simple dealing, in denouncing iudgement agaynst iniquity. Those godly fathers, myght be more fitly matched and compared with Eagles, whych alwayes prune and buske themselves before a storme, then to the swallowes, which depart with faire weather, or wyth Dolphines that wyl swimme no further, then the tyde wyll carry them. Now looke into the counterfaites, which like Battes and Owles, are euer woont to shrinke and shrowde themselves in silence, vpon seruile feare, and apply theyr heades and fancies, rather to the smoothing of mens humours, which are great, then resoluing what is trueth, because it is vncertaine.

The Sorceresse in the first of kinges, refused flatly to call any spyrite, in respect of heauy punishment, denounced by the kinges edict, vntill he gaue her leaue, whereas she should haue donne the duty of her calling, if it had bene consonaunt to religion and piety, for heauen and earth shall perish, before that euerlasting principle decay. *Magis parendum esse Deo, quam hominibus*, that in things which are not *ad id opus* but peremptorily charged and commaunded by the law, we must rather obey God then magistrates. Of thys crewe was that Moorish prophet, who whispered Abdelmon in the eare, while he was working for a crowne, with thys encouragement, *Modo taceas præstabo*, so thou wilt holde thy peace, I wyll perfourme my promise, and so are all those wise men (as we call them) in my conceite by contraries, who will not vndertake to furder any man, according to the foolish arte, before they stipulate two thynges, that is, beleefe in that they meane to worke, and secreseý whereof the first alwayes putteth the deuill in possession of the partyes soule, the second bringes assuraunce to themselves, of theyr  
owne

*of supposed prophecies.*

owne impunity. From hence come all those out cryes of those wanton Iſralits, Nolite videre nobis ea quæ recta ſunt, ſed loquimini nobis placencia, diuine not, touching matters that are right or good, but ſpeake thoſe thinges that pleaſe, and what are they, forſooth becauſe we ſhould not pawſe or ſtuddy too longe, it followes in that very lync, Videte nobis errores, wherevpon we gather, that they would not be pleaſed nor contented, vnleſſe couſonage the ſauce of flattery had altered their taſt: and yet it is moſt certaine (which S. Auguſtine ſetteth downe) that Qui lethargicum excitat, et qui phreneticum ligat, vtrique moleſtus, vtrunque amat, he that eyther awaketh a man that hath a lethargie, or manicles a phreneticke, though to both he ſeeme to giue offence yet he looueth both &c. The gloſing Prophets, had ſo long bewitched Achabes eares, that he coulde not abide the Prophet Miche: becauſe he neuer brought him pleaſing newes, but eyther of one plague or other, though the kinges offences nor the prophets mallice were the cauſes of the ſame, and Amasias would haue inhibited the prophet Amos, to pronounce the plagues in Bethel, which God determined to ſend vpon the people.

To theſe I adde all thoſe, Qui cum nos beatos dicunt, nos decipiunt, who deceiue vs when they call vs happy: which cry peace be vnto you, when the ſword hath peirced to our ſoules, who with a ſhameleſſe lye, would coniure vs to beleue, that we ſhould not ſwerue, who promiſe courteſie, and yet byte (a) with theyr teeth, who weaue ſtraunge webbes, and enter into (b) counſailes, but not by the ſpirite of almightie God, Qui cum dulce (c) fuerit venenum, abſcondunt illum ſub lingua, who when poyſon is ſweete, hyde it vnder theyr tongues, ſeducethe hearts of thoſe that are harmeleſſe, Per dulces (d) ſermones et benedictiones, by ſweete words and bleſſings, ſowe (e) pyllowes vnder the elbowes of all ages, to entangle ſoules which purpoſe if they can atchue, it is a kinde of lyfe or reſreſhing to theyr hearts, ſo that while the deuill daunceth rounde about as in a maſke, our ſences like the wincking eyes of Argus, are bewitched by the pype of flattery. But becauſe god gaue not to S. Paule, the ſpyrite of ſeruaile (f) feare, as may appeare by that he neuer attempted any thinge by the meane of aſſentation, (g) becauſe he neyther ſought to (h) pleaſe men, nor giue place to fleſh and (i) bloud, becauſe he executed and perſourmed not the worke of God (k) deceytefully, but liſted vppe hys (l) voyce, with courage, truth and confidence, howe braue or high ſo euer, conſiſtories of greate rulers were: we may repute him as a true, & lawful prophet, & ſo much the rather, by thys ſound effect, that the wicked could no more encounter, or reſiſt his courſe, then they could the doctrine of S. Steuen before, Propterea quod (m) redarguerentur ab eo, cum omni fiducia, becauſe they were reprooued by him, with all aſſurance.

Q. 3.

A nother Act. 6. 10

Eſa. 30. 10.

1. Re. 12. 3.

Eſay. 4.

Ier. 4. 11.

Ier. 27. 13.

(a)

Mic. 3.

(b)

Eſay. 30. 1.

(c)

Iob. 21. 12.

(d)

Rom. 16. 17.

(e)

Eze. 12. 18.

(f)

2. Tim. 1. 4.

(g)

1. Theſ. 1. 4.

(h)

Gal. 1. 10.

(i)

Gal. 1. 16.

(k)

Ier. 48. 10.

(l)

Eph. 6. 19.

(m)



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

**A** Nother circumstance ought diligently to be noted and regarded in this cause, that is, whither they that challenge the gift of prophecy aboue the rest, and will be counted prophets in the world, apply theyr knowledge to the profite of themselues, or to the glory of God, and comfort of the saythfull. I haue specified how scrupulous the ministers and angels of God were euer in accepting any kinde of reuerence from men, that might detract or draw one iotte from the diuine prerogatiue. Wherevnto we may adioyne the warinesse of Daniel who fearing least (n) the people might aduaunce him, any poynt aboue his ordinary pitch, assured them before hand, that misteries were not reuealed, in respect of more great and ample measure of discretion, or wysedome that was in him. For whosoever speaketh of himselfe seeketh (o) hys owne glory, but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, is true, and in hym resteth no kinde of iniustice. What are we (sayth S. Paple) (p) but ministers of Christ, and dispensers of his misteries: and (q) againe, his ministers in whom you haue beleueed, we consist not of a nature more diuine and excellent then other men, as diuers thought, that would haue honoured Paule and Barnabas, in stedde of (r) Iupiter and Mercury. We differ not in substaunce (sayth (s) S. Clement) but in professiō and godlines, we store and hoorde vp no treasure in these earthen vesselles (t) Vt sublimitas sit virtutis dei, et non ex nobis; that the excellency may be of the power of God, and not of vs &c. The Prophet Moses was so carefull, both of his country and for the church of Christ, and so reckslesse of hys owne perticuler, as for theyr sake he wished to be casted out of the (u) booke of life. I am the man (sayth David) that haue (x) sinned, and dealt naughtily, these sily sheepe haue not committed any fault, and therefore let thy wrath be tourned against mee and my fathers house. And Paul himselfe wished to be (y) Anathema from Christ for his brethren, which were his kins-men according to the flesh &c. This onely difference there is, that when it came to resolution, whither Moses would take charge of greued and afflicted men, or become a byrd of Pharaos nest, he preferred the disgrace (z) of Israell before the wealth of Egypt. And when Paule coude not please God without offence to men, he forsooke all for the gospel. Christ commaunded the diseased men, that had beene cured at his hande: to make no (a) noyse or brate abroade, but to depart in silence, when the people sought to crowne hym like a monaske of the world, (whose pryde is no parte of eternall glory) he gotte vppe to the (b) mountaines. Beside, if Iobab durst not depriue his maister of the credite and honour, of surprising a certaine towne called Abela by anticipation, (c) Ne nomini suo ascriberetur victoria, least the victory might haue been ascribed to himselfe, howe much lesse may we presume, to vaunt or glory which

(n)  
Dan. 2. 30.

(o)  
Ioh. 7. 18.

(p)  
1. Cor. 4. 2.

(q)  
1. Cor. 3. 6.

(r)  
Act. 14. 11

(s)  
Clem. rec.

65. lib. 4.

(t)  
2. Cor. 4. 7

(v)  
Exo. 30. 32.

(x)  
2. Re. 24. 17.

(y)  
Rom. 9. 3.

(z)  
Heb. 11. 25

(a)  
Ioh. 3. 11.

(b)  
Ioh. 6. 3.

(c)  
2. Re. 12. 18.

*of supposed prophecies.*

which indeede (as S. Paul saies) haue nothing of our owne, but what we haue (d) received. 1. Cor. 4. 7.

The same Apostle, beeing vrged, and as it were enforced, for the credite of the message which he brought, to tell what had beene reuealed to himselfe by extraordinarie fauour, vseth such a kinde of bashfull speeche and vtterance, notwithstanding in these wordes, *Noui hominem*, I knewe a certayne man: againe, Siue (a) in corpore, siue extra corpus, Whether in the body, or without the body. Furthermore, transferring the certayne knowledge, of the secreete from himselfe to God: and last of all, not so much as touching it, tyll foureteene yeeres complete and ended, after the thing was doone, as a man may readily discover his spirite, to haue been Apostolique and holy. Much after the same manner, Saint Iohn the Enangelist suppressing his owne name, altogether in all matters that concerne himselfe: vseth none other tytle then of the Disciple, whome Iesus (b) looued, Moreouer, it is holden for a principle, by saint Paule in another place, that whosoever thinketh himselfe to be (c) something, where he is nothing in verie deede, standeth in his owne lyght, and is verie much abused: and for feare least Paule himselfe, might be too much (d) extolled or puffed vp, with the greatnesse of reuelations, an angell of Sathan was sent to buffet him. The Angell would not abyde to be adored (by saint Iohn) in respect hee was his fellow seruauant: for (e) since it is theyr office to giue attendance vpon the wyll of God, and theyr greatest honour consisteth in the seruice, which they doo before his Throne, it is most farre from theyr intent, to challenge any thing that may deprive or robbe him of his glorie: And therefore is it well sayd, by Malachie, (f) Si ego Deus, vbi honor? If I be GOD, where is my honour? And againe, by Esaye, that he (g) wyll not resigne his glorie to another. I wyll not stand vpon the quoting, and repeating of a multitude of places, whereby wee may be taught, how fitte it is to detracte, as much as may be from our owne presumption, and adde it to the fauour of almighty God, and neuer to respect the paynting of our plumes, when wee striue about attayning grace: for by this lyttle we may finde, that whosoever vaunteth of any good thing, that descendeth not from aboue, hath not the spyrite of God, but of Lucifer, neyther is a Prophete but an hypocrite.

The same course haue the Prophetes euer holden, touching weakh: for Golde is but an excrement of earth, and therefore vsfite to be weighed, or ballaunced with an ornament of Paradise. Abraham, would receyue no kinde of present from the king of Sodome, least hee might be thought, to haue beene the (h) richer by his lyberalitie. Saule was commaunded, to (i) reserue no scrappe nor parcell of the spoyle, that was withdrawne from Amleack. Samuel, the blessed Prophete of almighty God, tooke a solemne othe that he had neuer (k) gleaned, nor embeasled

(d)

1. Cor. 4. 7.

(a)

2. Cor. 12. 3.

(b)

Iohn. 13. 23.

(c)

Gal. 6. 5.

(d)

2. Cor. 12. 7.

(e)

Laet. de fals. sap.

(f)

Mala. 16.

(g)

Esay. 42. 8.

(h)

Gene. 14. 32.

(i)

1. Reg. 13. 3.

(k)

1. Reg. 12. 3.



### *A defensative against the peyson*

- embeafeled the value of a myre, that belonged to his neighbour. The Prophete which brought tydings of the notable discomfiture of Ben-nadad, was charged nor to eate one crust of breade, nor drinke one cup of water by the way: which charge, because he (l) brake and violated in the house, and by the meane of a false Prophete, a Lyon rushed vna-wares out of the desert, & deuowred him. Elizeus, could not be perswa-  
 (l) 3. Reg. 13, 8. ded, to take so much (m) as a frayle of figs or reysons. Nor (n) Peter, and  
 (m) 4. Reg. 5, 15. Iohn, of Simon Magus, for the gyft of myracles. Iudas himselfe, hauing  
 (n) Act. 8, 18. somewhat better thought vpon the horrour, of his owne most exe-  
 (o) crable villany, in selling his deere maister for thyrty pence, slong them  
 Matth. 27, 3. to the (o) Phariseis, in a hanging rage, neyther durst the Phariseis them-  
 (p) selues (howe greatly soeuer they reioyced in the deede) bestowe them,  
 Matth. 27, 6. in the common (p) treasure of the Church, because they were the price  
 (q) of bloud, &c. We reade in deede, that saint Philippe kept open house  
 Act. 21, 8. and (q) hospitalitie, for all the workemen in Gods blessed haruest, but  
 not that any parcell of his wealth, was gotten by the prophecies of his  
 daughters.  
 (r) We maye saye the lyke of (r) Balaam, who reiected a ritch brybe, of  
 Num. 24, 13. Debora, of Nathan, Dauid, Oida, Agabus, &c. which spake by lawfull  
 (l) warrant of the holy Ghost, and confirmed theyr conceytes by sounde  
 Matth. 10, 8. auctoritie. They knewe well enough, who commaunded his Dis-  
 (t) ciples, (s) Quæ gratis accepissent, & gratis dare, to giue freely, what  
 Act. 20, 35. they had receyued freely: and whose principle it was lykewise, that it  
 (v) was a more (t) blessed thing to giue, then to receyue. They were not  
 Prou 23, 23. ignoraunt, what oddes there was betweene (v) purchasing and selling  
 (x) trueth, that God delyghreth not in (x) gyftes, that no wise man, wyll  
 1. Par. 19, 7. pricke his fingers among thornes, whereas no Roses are to be gathe-  
 (y) red: that Bishoppes ought not to be sharpe and (y) eager vpon gayne,  
 1. Tim. 2, 4. nor feede the flocke for regarde of (z) benefites: but of their owne  
 (z) accorde, nor labour for reward in this vncertayne lyfe, where so many  
 2. Tim. 2, 3. thystles growe, to choke the seedes of trueth, & which seldome prosper  
 (i) in a feeld of fortune. This was the cause why Christe taught his Dis-  
 Mark. 6, 8. ciples, (a) Nudos volare, that is to strippe themselues before they tooke  
 (b) theyr flight: Ne (b) auri deprimerentur pondere, least otherwise they  
 Hieron. ad might be depressed by the weight of treasure. The wordes which  
 Exuper. saynt Peter and saynt Iohn vsed to the seely crypple, at the gate of the  
 (c) Temple which is called beawtifull: (c) Aurum & argentum non habemus,  
 Act. 3, 8. were not ouercast with so fayre a flourish to the carnall sence of  
 (d) man, as those of Iudas, Quid (d) vultis mihi dare, what wyll you giue  
 Matt. 26, 15. mee, were vttered with a delyghtfull harmony: but those which soun-  
 (e) ded worst restored strength, and those that pleased best gaue a fee (e) to  
 Act. 1, 18. the gallows. Saint Paule was so farre, from seeking to enrich him-  
 (f) selfe by sacred gyftes and offices, as because he would be (f) chargeable  
 12. Cor. 11, 9.

*of supposed prophecies.*

to none, he laboured with his(g) owne proper hands. He could not endure the smallest blaste of vaine glorie, & though he knew by warrant of Gods word, that they which serue(h) the Altar, are to lyue vppon the same: yet 1. Cor. 4. 2. he renounced all his interest and lybertie, and was afrayde to temper with the baytes and lymetwigs(i) of gayne: least eyther they might take holde 1. Cor. 9. 13. of his wings, or abuse his disposition. When the Queene of Iberes, (k) (i) would haue rewarded the good capryue with large presentes, which in 1. Tim. 6. 11. the name of Iesus had recouered his sonne: shee transferred all the merite (k) from her selfe to Christ, desiring only that the Queene by sauing her own Souer. lib. 1. soule, would be thankfull vnto him, that was the aucthor of so great a be- cap. 7. nefite. Liberius, the godlie Bishop would not accept, one (l) crowne of (l) all those which were sent him from Constans that wicked Emperour, in Theod. lib. 2. the name of a francke gyft or beneuolence. The zealous Moonkes, which cap. 16. were haled and dregged out of theyr celles, by Theophilus the Bishop of (m) Alexandria, to minister & serue in his Church: finding the sayd Bishop, Socr. lib. 6. Vitam in (m) pecunia facienda conterere, to spende the full course of his cap. 7. lyfe, in making summes of money, would abyde no longer in his iurisdic- (n) tion. It is most certayne, which Tacitus setteth downe, (n) Res virtute me- Annal. lib. 4. lius, quam pecunia stare, that thinges prosper much better, by vertue then (o) by coyne, whereas they are woont to lye most (sayth (o) Lactantius) that De falsa couette wealth and hunt for gayne: Quæ res proculdubio a sanctis pro- sap. cap. 4. phetis abfuit, which thing (sayth he) without all doubt was most far from (p) holy Prophetes: Wherefore not vnto vs, O Lord, nor vnto vs, but to thy 1. Tim. 6. 5. blessed name be all honour and glorie. The wicked rake gaine, to be (q) perfect (p) godlinesse, they spare (q) not the flocke, they speake peruerse Acts. 20. 19. thinges, onely to (r) drawe Disciples after them. They seeke (f) glorie at (r) anothers hande, and not from GOD alone, they followe those thinges Acts. 20. 30. which (r) concerne themselves, and not Christe Iesus, they defend it as a (l) principle, Oportere etiam, vnde cunque (v) ex malo acquirere, that we may Iohn. 5. 44. snatch on all sides by naughty meanes, and why so? because (sayth saynt (r) (x) Iohn) they haue looued the glorie of men more then of GOD, ha- Phil. 2. 21. zarde then securitie. mandragora, then holynesse, a messe of redde ryse (v) pottage, then lyfe euerlasting. And as Origine writeth vppon the booke Sap. 15. 12. of (v) Numbers, wee enquire no more after such kindes of men, because (x) they haue the lotte of Dathan and Abiron, that is, the earth hath swallo- Iohn. 12. 43. wed them: wherefore it is not noted, as the meanest blessing, amonge (y) those which it pleased God, to sende to Salomon for Dauids sake, that Orig. in golde and siluer bare no price in his dayes, for, so long as mens eyes are Numb. daseled with a golden sunne, it wyll be somewhat hard to stave the gree- die mindes, of many from desiring that which is not lawfull. They which came to the Prophete Balaam for aduise, brought with them in (z) theyr handes, (z) Diuinationis prærium, the rewarde of his diuination. Num. 22. 7. The Leuite professed vnto Micheas, that he was content to serue, but it (3) should be. (4) Vbi sibi vtile fore prospexisset: where he founde it, for his Iud. 1. 19.



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

(b) greatest benefite. The sonnes of Heli, were such Prophets as these, gleaning  
 2. Reg. 2, 14. (b) daylie from the people, which repayed with a zealous heart and well  
 (c) affected minde, to the daylie sacrifice : and the sonnes of Samuel (c) lyke-  
 1. Reg. 8, 3. wise, who notwithstanding the religious example of theyr father, decly-  
 (d) ned into greedinesse, receiued brybes, and peruered iudgement. In this  
 4. Reg. 5, 22. rancke, we may marshall Gieze, who was at all that his maister had refu-  
 (e) sed : those false Prophetes lykewise, which in the dayes of Micheas, (e) Di-  
 Mich. 3, 11. uinabant in pecunia, prophesied for money. The Pythonisse, which is  
 (f) affirmed (f) *Magnum quæstum præstitisse, Dominis suis diuinando*, to  
 Acts. 16, 16. haue procured great gayne to hir Lords by prophecie. The Malcontentes  
 (g) at Rome, which (as Liuius shewes) (g) *Nouos ritus sacrificandi vaticinando*,  
 Liui. lib. 7. inferebant in domos : brought new rytes of sacrificing into priuate hou-  
 ses, to the peryll of the state, made theyr profite of young mindes, abused  
 by the vanities of superstition, vnder the maske of prophety. Among these  
 may we reckon the soothsayers and whysperers, who gathered so fast at  
 Rome, as the Senat was gladd to sette downe an order at the last, that  
 none but gentlemen should apply those matters, least so diuine an arte  
 might be wrested from the maiesty of religion to the seruitude of couisi-  
 (a) nage. Among these, we may not omitte (a) Demas, who forsooke Christe  
 1. Tim. 4. 10. for the worlde, nor Natalius, who for fifty shillingas was hyred to dis-  
 (b) charge the deury of a (b) byshoppe among hetetickes. Moreouer the glo-  
 Euse. lib. 5. cap. vlt. zing prophets, which in the tyme of Ireneus (as him selfe reportes) when (c)  
 (c) the church was luke warme with the bloud of Christ, were wont for gayne  
 Cont. Val. Occulta hominum in apertum proferre, to bring to light the secretes of  
 lib. 2. ca. 38. mens hearts. And Montanus also, who being puffed vpp with a winde of  
 (d) glory, first made a close compact with (d) Sathan notwithstanding former  
 Euse. lib. 5. cap. 15. vowes and promises to God, and afterwarde began to prophesy. To con-  
 clude, of thys kynde are the Prophets of thys tyme, who feeding vpon fol-  
 lies of our minde, as a scabbe dooth vppon noisome humors of the body,  
 gleane away the thrift of simple men, and eate vpp sily wyddowes wyth  
 houses. Belike they are of the same mynde whereof Nipos was, in saint  
 Ieroms time, they beleeue wyth that prating iacke Seruetus, whom Cal-  
 uine put to death, for heresie at Geneua, or with the Libertines, that all the  
 stedfast promises of grace and fauoure, which were made by Moses at the  
 publishing and setting foorth of the lawe, should be performed in thys  
 lyfe, for otherwise they would not set drosse to sale in stedde of golde, nor  
 ballace empty vessels with vnlawfull merchandise. By thys therefore wee  
 learne, what to deeme of those that will not pleade but for a fee, nor gyue  
 warning without wages.

**N**Owe let vs pose them once againe with hys demaunde, whither the  
 false prophets of thys age, agree together in theyr aimes, for thys  
 (e) note Paule embraceth as the rest, publishing in all the churches that  
 1. Cor. 14. God was not the God of disorde, (e) but of vnity. Againe, he will haue all  
 men

## *of supposed prophecies.*

men to be perfect in our (f) knowledge, and one kinde of vnderstanding: 33.  
 and to speake one trueth, as Christ himselfe would haue hys disciples (f)  
 noted, and distincted by this speciall (g) property of louing one another. 1. Cor. 12. 25  
 God promisseth by Ezechiell to hys (h) Cor vnum one heart, wherunto Via (g)  
 vna, one way is added (i) also by Jeremy, & bothe are monuments of truth, Ioh. 13. 35.  
 and pledges of his fauour. Before any man presumed to build towers vp to (h)  
 heauen, the worlde was (b) Terra vnus labii, et eorundem sermonum, a Eze. 11. 9.  
 lande of one lippe and of one language. At the first beginning of the (i)  
 Church, when the graces of Gods holy spirite were most plentifull, there Ier. 32. 39.  
 was but one (l) heart, and one soule among all the beleeuers, they were (k)  
 of one (m) conceyte in all thinges, and helde together in one lincke of Gen. 11. 2.  
 (n) charity. They gaue order for the cutting (o) of those off, which went (l)  
 about to disturbe thys golden meane, which is the (p) bonde of per- Act. 4. 32  
 fection, and the cheefest spectacle whereby we may (q) see God in his glo- (m)  
 ry: vpon these premisses, S. Paule might be bolde to conclude the church 2. Cor. 12. 9.  
 of Corinth to be (r) carnall. For where as there is amongst you strife and (n)  
 emulation are you not carnal sayth he, Ergo no Prophets. (s) Animalis e- 2. Cor. 13. 11  
 nim homo, non percipit ea quæ sūt spiritus dei, for the (ē) sūal or carnal mā Philip. 2. 1.  
 (sayth the same Apostle) perceiueth not those thinges, which are of the spi- (o)  
 rite of God &c. with whom S. Iames agrees in euery point, affirming that Gal. 5. 12.  
 kinde of wisdom not to descende from the father of light, but to be (r) (p)  
 Terrenam animalem, diabolica, in earthly, sensual or diuylsh. So long as Col. 3. 15.  
 it pleased God to deliuer oracles, (v) Per manus omnium videntium et (q)  
 prophetarum, by the handes of all the seers and the prophets, they were al- Heb. 12. 13  
 wayes founde in tune, and ready (as Lactantius reportes) to iustifie them- (r)  
 selues by one assured grounde and with one voyce, (x) whych S. Paule 1. Cor. 3. 3.  
 calleth (y) Idipsum inuicem senire, in so much as neyther the Carpocrati- (s)  
 ans coulde finde any iarre among the fathers, nor (z) Apelles any discorde 1. Cor. 2. 13.  
 in the Canon. But among the counterfeites aswell in thys as other notes (t)  
 sette downe before, it is farre otherwise for as they byte at euery bubble Iac 3. 14.  
 that aryseth in a troubled water, so Chrysostome noteth, that they square (v)  
 and vary not only from the lawfull pastors of the church: but euen among 4. Re. 17. 3  
 theyr owne fraternities, as for example Ephraim from Manasses, Annas (x)  
 from Caiphas, Herod from Pilate, one fretting and stingeing one another, De Ori. err.  
 like a generation of vipers, &c. till themselves be consumed, and thys is lib. 2. cap 8.  
 the very best end that can be looked for of deuision, eyther among holy (y)  
 men or aboute holy matters. When Deiotarus and Corta, beganne to lay Rom. 12. 16  
 theyr heads together, about the formes and plots of theyr prophecy: good (z)  
 Lord sayth one, what a difference and oddes were betweene theyr rules, Vt Euse. lib. 5  
 (a) quædam plane essent contraria, so as some of them were most plainly cap. 13.  
 contrary, and in an other place, the same author witnesseth, alias gentes (8)  
 aliter signa interpretatas, that some countreyes expounded these thinges, in Gal. 5. 15.  
 a diuerse sorte from others, wherevpon we may note, that theyr diuinati- (a)  
 on consisted not in the vertue of the thing it selfe, but in the flourish of Cicero. de  
 theyr diuine.



## *A defensatime against the poyson*

their owne imaginations. The Poets and Prophets as we find in Plutarch, could neuer be sette in one tune together, in recommending of the credite of Apollos Oracles, neyther can we reade of any concorde or agreement, betweene the Prophetes, which were euer whyspering in the eares of Sulla and Marius. Cæsar and Pompey, Octavius and Antony, sauing when the packe was sette among the crafty knaues, to deceive all parties. Furthermore the diuersity of grounds, or principles wherevpon the Painims built theyr sencelesse hopes, was thought by Socrates, to be the greatest cause of theyr debate, though in very deede there was truth in neyther side. I haue spoken somewhat before in my discourse against Astrologie, concerning the fowle cōtradictions, between Astrologers, about the faces, signes, gouernors, aspects, &c. the lyke are dayly seene among the coniuers, which shotte by the deuils ayme, and therefore it is tyme to checke this ietting Agar, which despiseth her olde dame the church and spouse of Christ, & to shaue off the lockes & pare the nayles of this Egyptian damsell, which faller to skinnishing and scratching of the Prophetes, although she can preuayle no more against an armie marshalled in order, then the Madianites (qui mutua cædese truncabant) or foolyshe knyghtes of Cadmus, which neuer gaue ouer fighting amonge themselves so long as any one was left aliue to mayntayne the quarrell. Many gaue in euidence against our Sauour Christ (sayth S. Marke) Sed conuenientia, non erant testimonia, but there was no concorde or agerement in theyr testimonies. The wicked ludges in Daniell, deliuered the worst against Susanna they could deuise, but theyr tales were no more lyke, then a Pomgranet and a Mulbery. So fareth it with our Prophetes for though they seeme by chauce sometime to consent, and agree together, it is but after the manner of Sampsons Foxes, which were ryed by the tayles, and disseuered by heades, that is vnited in lust and deuided in iudgement. Quoties enim repetunt, toties variant, for so often as they repeat theyr answers (sayth S. Augustine) so often doo they choppe and alter them. One Schisme fell out among the Pharasies, about the power whereby Christe wrought his miracles: another about the baptisme of S. Iohn, whether it were from heauen or not, and a thyrd, more bytter then both those, touching the rysing of the dead. Some Prophetes were of a mynde that Ierusalem should perish and lye waste, others that it should flourishie and be restored to the former glory, and as no man almost can keepe so badde a dyet, but some mountebanke or other wyll allowe, so no course can be vndertaken, so farre wyde from probable and likely groundes, whereto the deuill is not ready by one pursuiuaunt or other, to gyue a quicke encouragement, which prooues no lesse that consent is a badge of truth, then that discorde is an eare marke of vncertainty. Pithagoras deriued all sortes of vertues Ab vnitate, which vnder a vayle imported God, supposing the same to be free from all spottes and steynes, and Christe desireth also that his disciples may be knowne by this, for though some la-

uise

*of supposed prophecies.*

nish and wanton hounds may chaunce sometime to quest without a cause, though the surest archer may sometime shoote awry, and Nathan the Prophet might be forsaken by the spirit for that time, wherein he affirmed vnto Dauid that he should builde the temple vnto God, &c. yet where a full consent and cry of all the Prophets, Apostles, fathers &c. is resounded in one voyce or tune, we may be sure the chase is not farre off, and wythall accept the same, as a certaine warrant of hys worde, who (as S. Augustine wrytes) in Cathedrā unitatis doctrinam posuit veritatis, who hath planted the doctrine of trueth in the chayre of vnyty.

Soera. lib. 4.  
cap. 21.  
August.  
Epist. 106.

**T**He last note, whereby I coulede wish that Prophets should haue theyr small examination, is set downe from the mouth of God himselte, in the playnest manner: let thys be your signe sayth God, whatsoeuer the Prophet speaketh, yf it come not afterwarde to passe, I speake it not, but the Prophet inuented it, by swelling and puffing of his minde &c. and therefore be not thou afrayde of him. Againe Propheta qui vaticinatus est pacem, &c. The Prophet which is truly sent from God, may be discerned by this note, whither after he haue prophesied of peace, his word take effect or not &c. for I speake (sayth God) and what worde soeuer I haue vitered, shall come to passe; and agayne, though all men be lyers, yet my worde which passeth from my mouth, shall not retorne voyde, or wythout effect to me, Sed faciet quæcunque volui, et prosperabitur in his ad quæ misi illud, but shal worke whatsoeuer pleaseth me, & prosper in those thynges to which I haue appointed and directed it. A wise man will not trust a glasse that representeth a straunge face, much lesse a cogging Prophet that telleth of straunge fortunes, Vt enim quisque optime conicit, ita optimus propheta haberi debet, for as men ayme and coniecture best, so goes the credite of theyr Prophecie.

Deut. 18. 21.

Iere. 18. 9.

Psal. 115. 11

Esay. 55. 11.

Soera. lib. 5.  
cap. 19.

3. Re. 17. 24.

The widdowe of Sareptha, finding her sonne restored vnto lyfe againe, concluded, Ab effectis: that by this shew was assured that hee was a man of God, and his word preuayled in his mouth, &c. Micheas, hauing been condemned to imprisonment (with the bread of care & water of affliction) by the King: was content to be discredited for euer, and accounted as a carrier of tales and lyes, if the King returned with his lyfe from the battell. Annūtiat quæ ventura sunt in futurum, & dicemus quia dii estis vos: Tell vs. (sayth God by Esay) what things shall come to passe heereafter, and we wyl saye that you are gods: whereby it is apparent, that no iudgement can be giuen of the Prophets skyll, before prooffe be made of his abilitie. The Samaritan, would not acknowledge Christe to be a Prophete, tyll he had discovered her state, and reuealed matters which she supposed to haue been aboue mans reach: And to the same effect S. Paule declareth, that the simple man, which entering into the Church where the Prophetes are, findeth the deepest secretes of his hart reuealed, wyl fall downe prostrate, and confesse that God is among them. It is reported in the prayse of Ieremy, that whatsoeuer he spake tooke effect: and for prooffe thereof, it cannot be denied,

3. Reg. 22. 18

Eesai. 41. 23.

Iohn. 4. 19.

1. Cor. 14. 25

Iere. 32. 24.

R. 1. 3.

that



## *A defensatiue against the poyson*

- that so soone as he had giuen warning to the people, that they should perishe with the sworde, the slaughter came vpon them. After that Elizeus, had giuen comfort to the people, when the dearth was at the worst, that they should eate and leaue, the plentie and aboundaunce which came after seemed woonderfull. The reason why Saule repayred rather vnto Samuell, then any other for aduise: was because, *Quicquid loqueretur sine ambiguitate veniret*, whatsoever he did speake came to passe without ambiguitie. And surely, no man had better meanes of noting, and obseruing this rule afterward, then he: for after the Prophete had pronounced sentence against him and his offspring, they neuer prospered. The Prophete Ahias, had no sooner deliuered his opinion to the wife of Ieroboam, touching the taking of her chylde away: and Christe to the Centurion, about the curing of his sonne, but one gasped, and another recovered in that verie minute. When the Prophete called foorth a Lyon, to deuoure his fellow, for refusing to strike at the warning of almightie God, the beast was ready at a beck, and the man distracted and torne in peeces, for contempt and breach of duety. Nothing can be sayd, lesse probably in the iudgement and conceyt of man: then that the bloud of a King or Queen should be lycked vp with dogges: considering the great care & dilligence (which as appeareth by that plaine example) King of Asa, is vsed about spicing and embawming of theyr bodies, and yet, the sentence of the Prophete was fulfilled, *Iuxta verbum Domini, quod loquutus fuerat, &c.* Whether diuerse of king Ezechias his chyl dren, were not made Eunuches in the court of Babylon, as the prophete tolde, let the Scriptures testifie. The Iewes themselves, comparing those sharpe plagues which chaunced to Ierusalem: a good whyle after Christe had warned them, what sorowes were to come, beganne to thinke better of his calling. The faithfull, helde the Prophete Agabus in such a sound conceyt, as after he had certainly forwarned, of a pyning dearth that should ensue: they layd their purses together, & provided in good time, against the dreadfull weapon of necessitie. The schoolemaister of Antioch had no sooner pronounced what should become of Iulian, but he was arrested by the maie of providence, to aunswer for his bloudy slaughters, in the court of condemnation: inso much, as another of his sort was able to determine, of the certayne minute wherein that sauadge and wylde boore, which had bene so long rowting in the vineyard of Christe, should answer the price of his tyranny. Another godly Moonke, was so stedfastlie perswaded, that God would not breake the word which he had bothe warranted, and reuealed by his Prophetes: as not much vnlyke that rare example of Micheas, he engaged his owne body vpon this poynt, that the tyrant Valens should returne no more, vnlesse hee first enlarged the good Bishoppes, which were then disgraced, and in pittifull enduraunce, for preferring religion before innouation, and trueth before flattery. For those thinges which are reuealed to the Saintes, are, *Grandia & firma*, whereas the fables which are coyned in the forge of Sathan, and obtruded to the credulous,

*of supposed propheties.*

credulous, for theyr owne mishappe, are bothe Vana & vacua. What the lawfull Prophetes sayd, was euer true. What Zedechias, Pashur, Semeias, Simon Magnus, and the rest sette downe eyther melted, and dissolued into smoake, or fell out to the contrarie. Their blessings, were euer turned into cursinges, theyr fayre weather into storme, theyr hope into despayre, their expectation into empringe, their mirth into mourning: and howe euer they desired to disperse abroad, and giue out Placencia, that is, imaginations to please: yet their happe was neuer (if it were not by meere chaunce) to deliuer, Vera, that is, sound reasons, to perswade, or edifie.

Iere. 33. 3.

When Montanus and Maximilla were most forward, in making men a frayde with shaddowes, and perplexities of mishappes to come. Eusebius reporteth that not onely forraigne warres and troubles were at a styll, which was not seene in a long tyme before, Sed & ipsis christianis, stabilis & secura pax permansit: but the christians themselues, remayned in a stable and secure tranquillitie. Alemandurus, a false Prophete, rooke vpon him to assure the Persian, that he should conquere Rome, but himselte was there most shamefully discomfited. When the false Prophetes, in the dayes of Micheas, were not ashamed to crye out alowde: Dominus in medio nostrum non venient super nos mala, God is in the myddest of vs, and no misfortunes shall come ouer vs, &c. Gladius peruenit vsque ad animam, the sword pierced, to the verie soules of them. By this we finde, that not that spirite, Qui ferebatur super aquas, which was carried vpon the waters: but the glosing spirite, which dwelt in the mouthes of Achabs counsaylours, possesseth, bothe the tongues and hearts of those false Prophetes, which delight in lyes, and the moodes of other simple menne, who make proude fooles, more obstinate and glorious, by too great facility to be seduced. So, many reasons and examples, of the swaruing of false Prophetes, and their distressefull endes, haue beene set foorth before, as I wyll bresely conclude with Papias, a true Pastour of the first and purest age, that we must not giue sayth, or credite vnto Prophetes, which hobbe and roue at all aduentures: but determine vpon certayne grounds, not to those, which alwayes seeke to please our humour, but to reforme our liues, not to those, whose finall scope is glorie, but edification. Last of all, not to those, Qui circumferuntur omni vento doctrinae, which are carried about, with euerie puffe of doctrine: but grounded vpon that stedfast rocke of trueth, which is impregnable.

Lib. 5. ca. 15.

Socr. lib. 7. cap. 18.

Mich. 3. 8.

Gene. 1. 2.

Ephe 4. 14. Iud. 12.

Thus, haue I brought a long and tedious labour to an ende, whereby although I reape none other benefite, then of satisfaction to the world, together with mine owne discharge, from friuolous and fonde conceytes without colour: yet it shall content mee, and perhappes auayle me in the sight of GOD, to haue employed my skylle, and bent my slender force, to the raising and defacing of the battlementes of this wicked Babel, of confused hopes, which leadeth tyckle subiectes, not onely from consent in language, as the fourmer dyd, whose toppes aspyred to the clowdes: but, to

diuision.



Wt

# *A defensative against the poyson*

diuision in obedience and loyaltie, as Lucifer began, tyll he were curte off by iustice, and cast downe to the bottome. If any other person whatsoeuer, haue a meaning, to dispute the matter vpon better groundes, it may suffice: that eyther this which I haue layde together, shall encrease his store, or lyke a thresholde in the porche of the Temple, rayse him somewhat neerer to the poynt, or at the least expresse a meaning in my selfe, to haue perfoarmed more, if eyther knowledge had bene correspondent to desire, or vtterance to deuotion. God of his great mercie graunt vs all, the spirite of obedience, and conformitie to his blessed wyll, that howsoeuer, fortunes tossle or alter in this transitorie world, we may fixe our anchers in the comfort of his tender care, and possesse our soules in patience, atteinig after many frights and feares of thypwrack, to that porte of everlasting rest, which neyther can be disturbed by the stormes of pride, nor barred by the sandes of emulation. For, when all is doone, the glorie of this lyfe is but a blaste, and they that couette more on earth, then falleth to the lotte of theyr vncertayne state, shall be depriued of a greater happynesse in the ioyes to come, which are prepared for the chosen.

*Absolutum in nomine sancte, & indiuidua  
Trinitatis. Iunii. Sextio.*



